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ELEGANT COERCION AND IRAN:

BEYOND THE UNITARY ACTOR MODEL

by

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APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis meets masters-level standards of research, argumentation, and expression.

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Richard B. Andres, PhD   (Date)

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Lieutenant Colonel Gerald S. Gorman   (Date)

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Preface

While at the Naval Postgraduate School, I was introduced to two interesting concepts in international relations: coercion theory and models of state decision-making. In studying those concepts, I was surprised to learn that although coercion seeks to force an adversary to reach a particular decision, it typically employs simplistic models of state decision-making. This made me wonder if, perhaps, a new concept of coercion could be developed based on more robust models of state decision-making.

Iran presented itself as an ideal case study for this new concept of coercion. The failure of the United States to coerce Iran regarding its pursuit of nuclear weapons to date potentially highlights some of the shortcomings of current theories of coercion. Further, the growing tension between the United States and Iran makes the subject timely.

Several people deserve thanks for helping me complete this thesis. My classmates identified shortcomings in the thesis' logic – sometimes brutally so and Lieutenant Colonel Gorman was exceedingly patient as I fleshed out early ideas. Dr. Richard Andres encouraged me to "think big thoughts" while constantly pushing me to refine, clarify, and focus my topic. While the thesis is immeasurably improved as a result of their efforts, any shortcomings in the work are solely my own.

Most importantly, however, my family deserves my deepest thanks for once again providing tireless support while enduring yet another Air Force assignment that took far too much of the time that is rightfully theirs.

Abstract

Coercion involves the use, or threatened use, of force to influence an adversary's choices. At its core, then, coercion is about state decision-making. Most theories of coercion describe states as if they were unitary actors whose decision-making results from purely rational cost-benefit calculations. However, models that are more robust portray state decision-making as the result of complex interactions among important sub-state actors. This thesis presents a framework of coercion based on state decision-making involving multiple actors.

The thesis uses the framework to answer the question: how can the United States persuade Iran to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons? The framework identifies four key actors in Iranian decision-making regarding nuclear weapons: the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, President Mohammad Khatami, Head of the Expediency Council Hojjatoleslam Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). These actors operate in a complex and delicate balance of constitutional processes and clerical authoritarianism that characterizes Iranian decision-making.

The framework articulates a strategy of coercion to guide the employment of instruments to affect things these actors value and thereby their cost-benefit calculus. If properly developed, the framework predicts that the key actors in Iranian decision-making, and thus Iran itself, may be persuaded to abandon their pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Introduction

Iran has pledged not to develop nuclear weapons, and the entire international community must hold that regime to its commitments. . . Iran must comply. The free world expects Iran to comply.

—President Bush
Remarks at the US-EU Summit, 25 June 2003

The 2002 *National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States of America* proclaims that the greatest danger to the United States (US) "lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology."[1] Given its extensive support of terrorism and increasing concerns regarding its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), perhaps no country exemplifies that threat more than Iran.[2]

The NSS also declares the United States will prevent threatening countries such as Iran from developing WMD. The 2003 military action in Iraq illustrates the lengths to which the United States is willing to go to conduct counterproliferation. The action also demonstrates, however, that such action can be costly – in both treasure and blood. The challenges faced by the United States in Iraq are balanced, however, by the successful counterproliferation effort in Libya, where the United States persuaded Mu'ammar Abu Minyar al-Quadhafi to abandon his nuclear program *voluntarily*.[3]

The Libyan case suggests that the most effective and efficient way to neutralize the Iranian threat may be for the United States to convince Iran to abandon its WMD programs *by choice*. This represents the essence of coercion – the efforts of one state to

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[1] *National Security Strategy of the Untied States of America, 2002.* Washington, D.C., 2002, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss1.pdf, accessed 17 January 2005.

[2] Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism - 2002,* Released by the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, April 30, 2003, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2002/html/19988.htm, accessed 17 January 2005. See also, President George W. Bush, "The President's State of the Union Address," The United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., 29 January 2002, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html, accessed 17 January 2005.

[3] Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, "U.S. Security Strategy Induced Libya to Give up WMD Programs," White House fact sheet on steps taken by Ghadafi government, 19 December 2003, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2003&m=December&x=20031219185634namfuaks0.234524&t=xarchives/xarchitem.html, accessed 5 April 2005.

influence another's cost-benefit calculations on a given issue in order to produce a particular outcome. Theories of coercion predict that when the costs of resisting a coercer's demands outweigh the likely benefits, the coerced state will *decide* to comply.

At its core, then, coercion is about state decision-making. Most theories of coercion, however, are based on the least comprehensive models of state-decision making. That is, they describe states as if they were unitary actors whose decision-making results from purely rational cost-benefit calculations.[4] Yet, as articulated in Graham Allison's seminal work on the Cuban Missile Crisis, state decision-making is more accurately described as the result of organizational procedures and political bargaining within the institutions of government.[5] In short, the interaction of multiple sub-state actors drives state decision-making.

This realization has profound implications for coercion; if coercion involves attempts to influence state decision-making, then changing the models used to describe decision-making is likely to change the way states go about coercion. Unfortunately, in the three decades since Allison first published his work, scholars of coercion have not expanded their theories to account for Allison's findings. As a result, when coercion is used today, as the United States is doing against Iran, it is less likely to succeed.[6] To increase its chance of success, policy makers must use more nuanced models of state decision-making.

Research Question

In this thesis, I attempt to expand coercion theory to account for more robust models of state decision-making. Specifically, I ask the question: how can the United States use coercion based on multiple actor decision-making to persuade Iran to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons? In answering this question, I replace the unitary actor

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[4] Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion, American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 13.

[5] Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision, Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2d ed. (New York: Longman, 1999), 5-7.

[6] In a compilation of studies of coercion since World War II, Robert Art and Patrick Cronin find that coercion has only been successful 32% of the time. This confirms an earlier study done by Alexander George, which produced similar findings. See Alexander L. George and William E. Simons eds., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2d ed. (Westview Press: Boulder, CO, 1994) and Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin, eds., *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2003), 387.

component of coercion with a more descriptive model based on multiple actor decision-making. The multiple actor concept is drawn from Graham Allison's models of government decision-making developed in *The Essence of Decision*. I use these models to argue that, if it is to be successful in its counterproliferation coercion against Iran, the United States must identify and influence the key actors and processes in Iranian decision-making.

Assumptions and Limitations

This thesis is framed by two important assumptions and notable limitations. First, I assume that the myriad individuals who participate in government decision-making are, *individually*, susceptible to coercion. That is, individuals employ cost-benefit analyses that can be affected sufficiently to persuade them to prefer certain actions to others. Further, I assume that, at some level, those preferences can be linked to specific issues in such a way as to influence state decision-making.

These assumptions are necessary to expand coercion theory to account for multiple actor-based decision-making. However, while I attempt to broaden coercion theory by expanding its view of state decision-making, it is not possible to capture *every* aspects of state decision-making. Therefore, the framework proposed in the thesis will remain a simplification of reality. My hope is that it will be more robust than current unitary actor-based coercion theories. Collectively, the assumptions and limitations in the thesis bound the topic sufficiently to permit a detailed response to its research question.

Overview

I answer the thesis's research question by building and applying a framework of multiple actor coercion to the case of Iran. In chapter 1, I provide a review of theories of coercion and decision-making. After defining the key aspects of coercion and state decision-making, I merge the key components of each to create a multiple actor coercion framework.

In chapter 2, I provide an analysis of Iran. The chapter includes a review of Iran's history, culture, and politics as a way to understand the current situation in Iran. I

describe the formal and informal power structures in Iran's government institutions. Finally, I identify the key players and processes involved in Iranian decision-making.

In chapter 3, I apply the academic theories of chapter 1 to the particulars of Iran as described in chapter 2 to produce a strategy of counterproliferation coercion against Iran. The chapter identifies specific actors as potential targets of US action to coerce Iran to abandon its pursuit of WMD.

The thesis's conclusion synthesizes the key aspects of chapters 1 through 3 and examines the implications for its findings. It ends with a review, summary, and restatement of the thesis's principle conclusions.

Admittedly, the multiple actor coercion framework developed in this thesis is simple and potentially obvious. Yet, surprisingly, few major works have applied advanced notions of state decision-making to theories of coercion. This unfortunate reality has limited coercion theory's utility in real world foreign policy – Iran is a perfect example. To date, theories have yielded disappointing solutions on how to coerce Iran. This thesis produces a framework of coercion that may provide more robust solutions to the complex international security challenges currently facing the United States.

Chapter 1

Theories of Coercion and Decision-Making

Coercion requires finding a bargain, arranging for [the adversary] to be better off doing what we want – worse off not doing what we want – when he takes the threatened penalty into account.

—Thomas Schelling
Arms and Influence

Treating national governments as if they were centrally coordinated, purposive individuals provides a useful shorthand for understanding policy choices and actions. But this simplification – like all simplifications obscures as well as reveals.

—Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow
Essence of Decision

Theories of decision-making are fundamental to theories of coercion – applying the latter implies certain beliefs about the former. Ironically, the most widely embraced theories of coercion rely on the most simplistic theories of state decision-making. That is, virtually all theories of decision-making describe the process as a complex interaction among a variety of actors, organizations, and processes, influenced by myriad contextual factors. Paradoxically, virtually all coercion theories view state decision-making as if it were the product of a unitary, cost-benefit calculator.[7] The reason for this is easy enough to understand: viewing a state as a unitary actor makes conceptualizing its actions much more simple. While there are benefits to viewing state action as the result of a unitary actor's decision-making, there are also costs, such as a reduced fidelity that

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[7] Most works on coercion acknowledge the limitations incurred by adopting a unitary actor view of state decision-making. However, those same works, recognizing the complexity of governmental decision-making, typically opt to apply the unitary actor model nonetheless. See Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 86.

oversimplifies the complex problems of the real world. In this chapter, I merge key components from theories of coercion and state decision-making to develop a more robust model of coercion.

Theories of Coercion

Coercion is the deliberate use of state power to influence the choices of one's adversaries.[8] It can involve all instruments of power, but most often relies on military and economic means. It has always been present in international relations, but gained prominence as a distinct theory of state interaction in 1966 when Thomas Schelling published *Arms and Influence*. In that work, Schelling defined coercion as a bargain between states where the coerced state *chooses* to comply with a coercing state's demands in order to avoid punishment.[9] Schelling's ideas on coercion grew out of his belief that the Cold War nuclear competition between the United States (US) and the Soviet Union had eliminated the practical employment of military weapons; and that the real utility of military weapons had become their ability to threaten states in pursuit of national interests. Accordingly, states faced with the prospect of a devastating nuclear attack could be persuaded to *choose* actions favorable to their coercer. Schelling's work established an important conceptual framework for international relations and has served as a point of departure for variations on ideas of coercion.

Distilling the common elements of these theories produces the fundamental characteristics of coercion. At its most basic level, coercion is defined as one state's attempt to persuade another to reach some decision. It involves either threatening to use force or actually using limited force to influence an adversary's decision-making process. Thus, coercion involves manipulating the cost-benefit decision calculus of another state. The key elements of coercion include strategies, mechanisms, target sets, and instruments – each of which is described below.[10]

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[8] Rob de Wijk, "The Limits of Military Power," *The Washington Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 82. Coercion theory is not limited to the interaction between states – it is equally applicable to relations between sub-state actors and non-state actors. However, as the purpose of this thesis is to examine US counterproliferation against Iran, the thesis focuses on coercion as it relates to state decision-making.
[9] Schelling, 1-6.
[10] The terminology in this list is a combination of terms drawn from Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win, Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 54; and Daniel Byman and

By definition, coercion involves influencing cost-benefit calculations. A coercion strategy is defined by whether it affects the costs of resisting, the benefits of resisting, the costs of complying, or the benefits of complying with a coercer's demands.[11] In *Bombing to Win*, Robert Pape presents three major types of coercion, two of which seek to raise the costs of a state's resistance to coercion while the third seeks to negate the potential benefits of resistance (see figure 1).

Interestingly, Pape's analysis assumes that only resistance contains potential costs and benefits. Robert Art and Patrick Cronin, however, argue that coercion is most often successful when it includes positive incentives.[12] That is, when the coercing state offers the coerced state financial or other incentives to comply with its demand. In this way, Art and Cronin are suggesting that compliance has costs and benefits in the same way resistance does.

While Pape's theory describes coercion that increases costs and decreases the benefits of resistance and Art and Cronin's articulate coercion that increases benefits of compliance, it is important to note that none of the major theorists discuss coercion that seeks to *lower* the costs a state will bear if it *complies* with a coercer's demands. However, such a coercive strategy is certainly possible. For example, during the mid-1990s, the United States attempted to coerce North Korea into closing its older, heavy water nuclear reactors because of the ease with which their spent fuel could be used to develop nuclear weapons. To do so, however, would have imposed costs on North Korea – specifically lost energy production capability. The United States attempted to lower

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Matthew Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion, American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 27. It is important to note that the two works are inconsistent in their terminology. For example, Pape describes decapitation as a strategy, while Byman and Waxman define it as a mechanism. Yet, in other instances, different terms are used to describe common concepts. This thesis uses the term "strategy" to describe whether coercion affects the costs or benefits of a decision calculus and the term "mechanism" to describe the chain of events that influence a decision calculus.

[11] Pape, 18-9, 56.

[12] Art and Cronin do not explicitly identify incentives as a type of coercion. They merely assert that when incentives are included as part of coercion, the likelihood of success increases. This thesis applies Pape's taxonomy of coercive strategies to Art and Cronin's incentives argument to define a type of coercion based on manipulating the concession side of the coerced state's cost-benefit calculus. See Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin, eds., *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2003), 388.

these costs by offering to build light water reactors for North Korea.[13] This thesis defines such coercive strategies as shielding.

It is important to note that the four possible coercion strategies can be used individually or in any combination as part of an integrated strategy of coercion. The four strategies are summarized as follows.

<u>Coercive Strategies</u>

Punishment   **Seeks to increase the costs of resistance**

Denial   **Seeks to lower the benefits of resistance**

Shielding   **Seeks to lower the costs of compliance**

Inducement   **Seeks to increase the benefits of compliance**

Figure 1 – Coercive Strategies

Although each of these strategies focuses on a different component of an adversary's cost-benefit calculus, each also includes the threatened or limited use of force, which is fundamental to the definition of coercion. The nature of the force used or threatened may vary, but in order to be considered coercion, it must be limited. These limitations are necessary because coercion is based on an adversary's ability to *choose* to comply with the coercer's demands. If force is used to the point where an adversary is left *without* a choice, the effort is not considered coercive. For example, from 1990 – 2003, the United States attempted to *coerce* Iraq to surrender its weapons of mass destruction. However, once Operation Iraqi Freedom began in 2003, the US was no longer engaged in a coercive campaign. Rather, it intended to force its will upon Iraq.

Because coercion requires the adversary to choose to comply, all theories of coercion rely on some action to convince an adversary to comply with a coercer's demands. These are known to as mechanisms – the processes by which the threat or

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[13] Art and Cronin, 169.

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infliction of costs generates concessions.[14] Mechanisms are complex processes involving intricate interactions between a state's policy-making processes, the functioning of its military, economy, and society, and the individual and collective psychology of enemy leaders and citizens.[15] In short, they are the chain of events initiated during coercion that will convince an adversary to yield.

Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman suggest there are five basic types of mechanisms: power base erosion, which threatens a regime's relationship with its core supporters; unrest – creating popular dissatisfaction with a regime; decapitation, which jeopardizes a leadership's personal security or ability to remain in power; weakening – debilitating the country as a whole; and denial – preventing battlefield success (or political victories via military aggression).[16] This thesis draws from Art and Cronin's inducement strategy to define a sixth mechanism: incentive. Incentive is defined as action enticing an actor to accept the coercer's demands through transfer of wealth or other valuable items. These six mechanisms are the specific ways that coercive actions influence the cost-benefit calculus of state decision-makers.

Coercion theory holds that mechanisms result from action against target sets. A target set is a collection of physical or conceptual items that are valuable to the state being coerced. Coercion theory predicts that affecting objects in a target set will unleash the mechanism that will ultimately produce the desired outcome. Instruments are the methods used to affect target sets. These can include any combination of a state's instruments of power – from diplomatic demarches to information operations to military offensives, to economic embargos. Most often, however, coercion involves military and economic actions.

When combined, the components of coercion described above function together as follows. A coercing state uses an instrument to affect an adversary's target set with the intent of unleashing a mechanism in order to influence the decision-making in an adversary state. Coercion theory predicts that if the correct instrument is used against the proper target set, the state may yield to the coercer's demands.

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[14] Byman and Waxman, 48.
[15] Karl Mueller, "The Essence of Coercive Air Power: A Primer for Military Strategists," *Air and Space Power Chronicles* (17 September 2001): n.p., on-line, Internet, http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/cc/mueller.html, accessed 19 January 2005.
[16] Byman and Waxman, 50.

Current theories of coercion typically treat state decision-making as the output of a value-maximizing unitary actor. That is, they assume governments hold a common set of values, support a single set of goals, speak with a single voice, and choose from available options based on a rational, value-maximizing cost-benefit analysis. Based on this view, successfully coercing a state requires only that a state take actions to influence the cost-benefit calculus of the unitary actor government. This conception of coercion is depicted in figure 2.
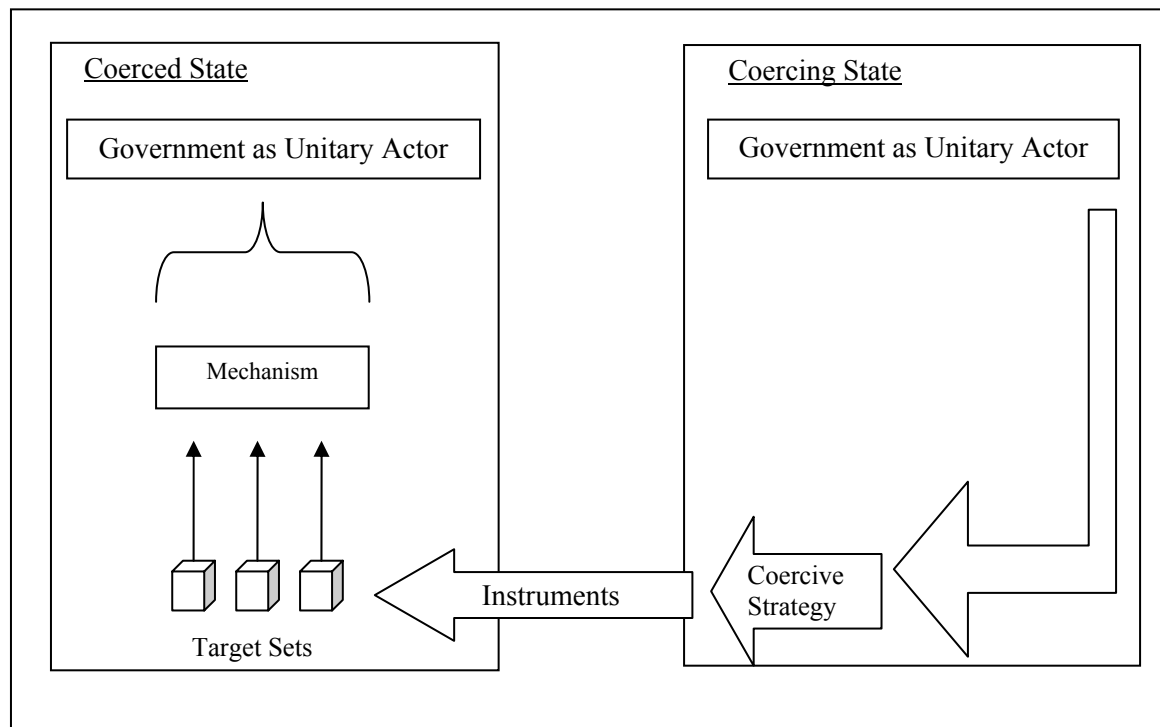
Figure 2 – Unitary Actor Framework of Coercion

Current theories of coercion also recognize that, even under the best of conditions, coercion is most often unsuccessful.[17] That is, a coercing state is most often unable to influence the decision-making calculus of its adversary sufficiently to achieve its objectives. One possible reason for this is the policy maker's overly simplistic view of state decision-making. Infusing coercion theory with a more robust view of state decision-making may produce more effective concepts of coercion.

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[17] Alexander George's analysis shows a success rate of approximately 29%. Art and Cronin validate that finding with an analysis of 16 additional case studies that show a 31% success rate. Robert Pape's analysis of air power coercion argues that coercion only works under select circumstances. See Art and Cronin, 387; and Pape, 314.

Theories of State Decision-Making

In *Essence of Decision*, Graham Allison analyzes the Cuban Missile Crisis using three different models of state decision-making. In the years since the book's publication, Allison's three models, the unitary actor model (Model I), the organization output model (Model II), and the bureaucratic politics model (Model III), have become major schools of state decision-making analysis in political science.[18]

Model I, The Unitary Actor Model of State Decision-Making

Allison's unitary actor model stems from traditional views of international relations, which assume that every state's primary interest is its survival. Accordingly, those states' governments act in unison to develop foreign policies that are fundamentally based on ensuring state security. This ensures that all governments, and therefore all states, act in essentially the same way – that is, they behave as unitary actors whose cost-benefit calculus is dominated by concerns over security. By extension, it becomes possible for one state to predict the actions of another in any given situation by presuming the logical action *any* unitary leader would take in order to ensure state security. In effect, the particular quality of a given state is unimportant, and all states can be seen as behaving in roughly the same way: as unitary cost-benefit calculators pursuing security.[19] Drawing on this tradition, Model I defines a nation's head of state or head of government as the unitary personification of a state.[20]

This view of state decision-making is at the heart of nearly all current theories of coercion. Viewing states as unitary, rational actors provides a heuristic way to contemplate coercion. Yet, as Thomas Schelling writes:

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[18] Appendix A contains a summary of Allison's three models of state decision-making.. Allison's work is not without critics, however. Several analysts critique Allison's portrayal of the organizational process and bureaucratic politics models as inaccurate or inappropriately applied. See Jonathan Bendor and Thomas H. Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," *The American Political Science Review* 86, no. 2 (June 1992); R. Harrison Wagner, "Dissolving the State: Three Recent Perspectives on International Relations," *International Organization* 28, no. 3 (Summer 1974); and Lawrence Freedman, "Logic Politics and Foreign Policy Processes: A Critique of the Bureaucratic Politics Model," *International Affairs* 52, no. 3 (Jul 1976).

[19] Charles W. Kegley Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf, *World Politics, Trend and Transformation*, 5th ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 46.

[20] Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *The American Political Science Review* 63, no 3 (Sep 1969), 694.

For working out the incentive structure of a threat, its communication requirements and its mechanism, analogies with individuals are helpful; but they are counterproductive if they make us forget that a government does not reach a decision in the same way as an individual in a government. Collective decision depends on the internal politics and bureaucracy of government, on the chain of command and on the lines of communications, on party structures, on pressure groups, as well as on individual values and careers.[21]

Since notions of decision-making are integral to coercion, the differences between individual and collective decision-making can result in differences in coercive strategies, and their associated instruments, target sets, and mechanisms. Therefore, developing a more complete understanding of state decision-making is essential if coercion is to be successful. Allison attempts to provide this understanding by describing the organizational and political dynamics that drive state decision-making.

Model II, The Organization Process Model of State Decision-Making

Allison's Model II (organization output model) is based largely on economic theories of business decision-making and differs significantly from the unitary actor model.[22] In the organization output model, states' decision-making is seen as the output of a loosely allied collection of governmental organizations, each of which perceives and responds to issues in ways consistent with the organization's culture and mission. As such, Model II acknowledges that states are not unitary actors and that state action results from the interaction of semi-independent organizations.

Modern governments are comprised of numerous and unique organizations. These organizations participate daily in processes that drive the decisions made by states. The way each organization contributes to state decision-making is a function of a range of factors such as organizational cultures, inter- and intra-organization communication, competing demands for resources, and the inherent inflexibility of large bureaucracies. These factors limit the freedom with which government agencies can react to issues. As a result, agencies utilize standard organizational procedures to articulate organizational

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[21] Schelling, 86.

[22] R. Harrison Wagner, "Dissolving the State: Three Recent Perspectives on International Relations," *International Organization* 28, no. 3 (Summer 1974): 446.

responses to governmental issues. Those procedures stem from the agency's mission and culture, and often represent the parochial interests of the agency.[23]

As organizations flow their responses up through the government's bureaucracy, the government's senior leaders combine them to create a menu of options that bound how a state will respond to the original issue. Since governments have finite resources, the menu of available response options is necessarily limited. Model II applies this characterization to all governments and posits that, while the particular issues of a state's decision-making and the specific choices available to state leaders may vary, the basic pattern will be repeated in virtually all states.

In this model of decision-making, the state does not march in perfect unison toward common objectives. Instead, the myriad organizations involved in decision-making march toward unique objectives, even if unintentionally. In the organization output model then, the key to understanding state decision-making is to identify the relevant organizations and patterns of organizational behavior.[24]

Model III, The Bureaucratic Politics Model of State Decision-Making

Like the organization output model, Allison's bureaucratic politics model focuses on sub-state actors to describe state decision-making. Drawing on theories of political interaction developed by Richard Neustadt, Allison describes state decisions in the bureaucratic politics model as the outcome of bargaining and political competition between a state's key policy makers.[25] In Model III, Allison describes the state decision-making apparatus as a conglomeration of many individual actors, each with unique notions of strategic objectives, organizational goals, and personal desires.[26] These actors share governmental power and exert varying degrees of influence on state decision-making based on their personal traits, position in the government hierarchy, formal and informal relationships with other decision-makers, and the nature of the issue being addressed.

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[23] Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," 699-700.
[24] Ibid., 702.
[25] Wagner, 446.
[26] Graham T. Allison, and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2d ed. (New York: Longman, 1999), 255.

Often, these players disagree as to the best decision for a given issue. When the actors view the issue as sufficiently important, they resort to competitive politics to achieve their preferred outcomes. Many times this occurs at the expense of what would be better for the state as a whole. In short, government decision-making is not a clean process of selecting the optimum choice from among distinct alternatives. Rather, it is the result of "compromise, coalition, competition, and confusion among government officials who see different faces of an issue."[27] In the bureaucratic politics model, then, the key to understanding state decision-making is to identify the relevant individuals, coalitions, and the political relationships between them for a given issue.

State decision-making as described by the organizational process and bureaucratic politics models is far more complex than state decision-making as described by the unitary actor model. However, as Allison emphasizes, the three models are not mutually exclusive. In other words, all three models have value in terms of understanding state decision-making, and distilling the key aspects of each yields important insights with regard to coercion. First, all three models acknowledge that *individuals* typically make decisions based on value maximizing, cost-benefit analysis. Whether the individuals are heads of government, chiefs of governmental organizations, or influential players in a government's inner circle, their decisions are governed by a cost-benefit calculus. Second, government organizations and processes are fundamental to state decision-making. In other words, governments do not act as purposeful individuals. Some sub-optimization occurs in the organizational processes and bureaucratic relations of sub-state actors. Finally, powerful individuals are important components in state decision-making. These individuals compete and compromise to advance their preferred options as a fundamental part of government policy making.

These key aspects of Allison's models stem from his recognition that state decision-making involves multiple actors. The interaction among these players has implications for decision-making that suggest different strategies, and therefore mechanisms, targets sets, and instruments, are required for successful coercion. Therefore, merging these aspects with the key concepts of coercion has the potential to yield more robust and effective prescriptions for coercion.

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[27] Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," 699-700.

A Multiple Actor Framework of Coercion

Because current coercion theories view states as unitary actors, applying the key aspects of Allison's models to coercion requires that coercion theory be expanded to account for the multiple actors involved in decision-making. In particular, this thesis defines three new components for coercion theory: authorities, audiences, and items of value. Each of these is discussed below.

Authority

The concept of an authority is necessary to differentiate between the individual or entity that formally sits atop a state's government decision-making apparatus and the sub-state actors that make up that apparatus. I define authorities as the individuals or organizations recognized as the legitimate state entities vested with the power to act on behalf of their state in international relations.[28] Typically, authorities are heads of state or government; but regardless of a government's structure, they are the sole individuals or organizations empowered to declare a state's intention regarding its decision to resist or comply with coercion.

In the unitary actor model, the authority is synonymous with the coerced state's decision-making apparatus. In this case, the authority would have absolute power to make all state decisions without influence from other governmental actors. As Allison's Model II and Model III show, however, states do not often make decisions in this way. According to these models, a state's decision-making is not synonymous with the desires and preferences of the individual or entity who leads a state. Rather, the authority's role is merely to proclaim formally the decision that results from the organizational processes and bureaucratic politics of governments.

These distinctions are important for coercion. If, as in Model I, the authority's preferences are synonymous with state decision-making, then efforts to coerce that state

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[28] Margaret G. Hermann and Charles F. Hermann use the term "decision unit" or "ultimate decision unit" to describe this function. See Margaret G. Hermann and Charles F. Hermann, "Who Makes Foreign Policy Decisions and How: An Empirical Inquiry," *International Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (Dec 1989): 362 and Charles F. Hermann and Margaret G. Hermann, "The Synthetic Role of Decision-Making Models in Theories of Foreign Policy: Bases for Computer Simulation," in *Theories Models, and Simulations in International Relations: Essays in Honor of Harold Guetzkow*, ed. Michael Don Ward (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 229.

should focus on the authority's decision calculus. If, however, state decision-making is the result of Model II and III dynamics, then efforts to coerce that state must focus on those organizations and individuals that truly drive that process. I define these sub-state actors as audiences. In most cases, the authority is simply one of the audiences involved in state decision-making. The particular nature of a given state determines the influence the authority exerts on decision-making relative to other audiences.

Audience

Audiences are the specific organizations and individuals that are instrumental to state decision-making for a given issue. Audiences are always the dominate drivers in state decision-making, and their interaction with the authority is fundamental to coercion. In the unitary actor model, the audience is synonymous with the authority. That is, they are the same individual or entity. Therefore, in Model I, coercing a state is simply a function of coercing a single audience.

Models II and III, however, are more complex. In these models, audiences are the sub-state actors within the government decision-making apparatus that are the primary actors in state's decision-making process for a given issue. Audiences are those entities or individuals whose cost-benefit calculus must be affected if a state is going to adopt the particular position sought by a coercer. As such, audiences should be the focus of a state's coercive effort. In other words, audiences are the subjects a coercing state seeks to influence.[29] Coercion based on multiple actor decision-making predicts a state will concede to a coercer's demands when the correct audience or audiences are influenced properly. For example, in Allison's account of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and the United States Navy were among the audiences that shaped the US decision to employ a naval blockade of Cuba. Had the Soviet Union been able to persuade Secretary McNamara or the US Navy that a naval blockade was too costly, Secretary McNamara may not have advocated for the blockade during meetings of

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[29] Clearly, an organization does not have a decision calculus. However, organizations are made up of individuals who do. The concept presented here assumes that, at some point, a sufficient number of the individuals that constitute an organization will be influenced such that the organization as a whole can be considered to have been influenced.

the Executive Committee, and the blockade would not have been selected as the preferred course of action.

To influence an audience's cost-benefit calculus requires a coercing state to convince it that the costs of resisting the coercer's demands outweigh the potential benefits of resisting them or that the benefits of complying with the coercer's demands outweigh the potential costs of complying. This involves imposing costs on, denying benefits to, shielding costs from, or providing benefits for, something that the audience holds dear. I define such things as items of value.

Items of Value

Items of value represent things, both tangible and intangible, that are important to an audience.[30] These may or may not be synonymous with what current coercion theory terms target sets – the physical objects that can be attacked by a coercer. The difference between items of value and target sets is important in that it separates the object of an attack from what is affected by the attack. For example, in the United States, an item of value for a particular audience may be freedom. Since a coercer cannot target freedom directly, it must target objects in such a way as to affect freedom. For instance, if a coercer were to attack several nodes of public transportation, the United States might increase security at transportation facilities to such a degree that it reduced the public's freedom. In this case, the item of value was freedom, but the target set was public transportation facilities. Items of value are important for coercion based on any model of state decision-making. However, when coercion involves organizational process and bureaucratic politics models, they become more important because each of the multiple actors involved in the decision-making process can have unique items they view as valuable.

As previously described, Allison's theories of decision-making based on multiple sub-state actors provide a more realistic account of state decision-making. Unfortunately, such theories are largely absent from current theories of coercion. To surmount these shortcomings requires that a concept of multiple actor decision-making be combined with

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[30] Items of value are similar to Byman and Waxman's idea of pressure points, which they define as sensitive areas against which the adversary cannot impenetrably guard. The authors argue that successful coercion requires on identifying and threatening these points. See Byman and Waxman, 30.

the expanded concept of coercion as described above. I combine my new concepts of authority, audiences, and items of value with the traditional coercion concepts of strategies, mechanisms, targets and instruments and apply them to the key aspects of multiple actor state decision-making to form the Multiple Actor Coercion Framework (MACF).

Multiple Actor Coercion Framework

The Multiple Actor Coercion Framework assumes that multiple sub-state actors are fundamental to the adversary's decision-making. In the MACF, a state develops a strategy to employ instruments to attack an adversary's target set to affect an audience's item of value and thereby its cost-benefit calculus. When the audience's cost-benefit calculus favors concession, the MACF predicts that a mechanism will be unleashed that will drive state decision-making, and therefore the authority, to accept concession. When considering the Multiple Actor Coercion Framework, three concepts are important: first, an audience *can* also be the authority, second the authority is almost always an audience, and third, a target set *can* be an item of value. Figure 3 – Multiple Actor Coercion Framework – provides a visual depiction of this new notion of coercion and appendix B provides a summary of its key concepts.
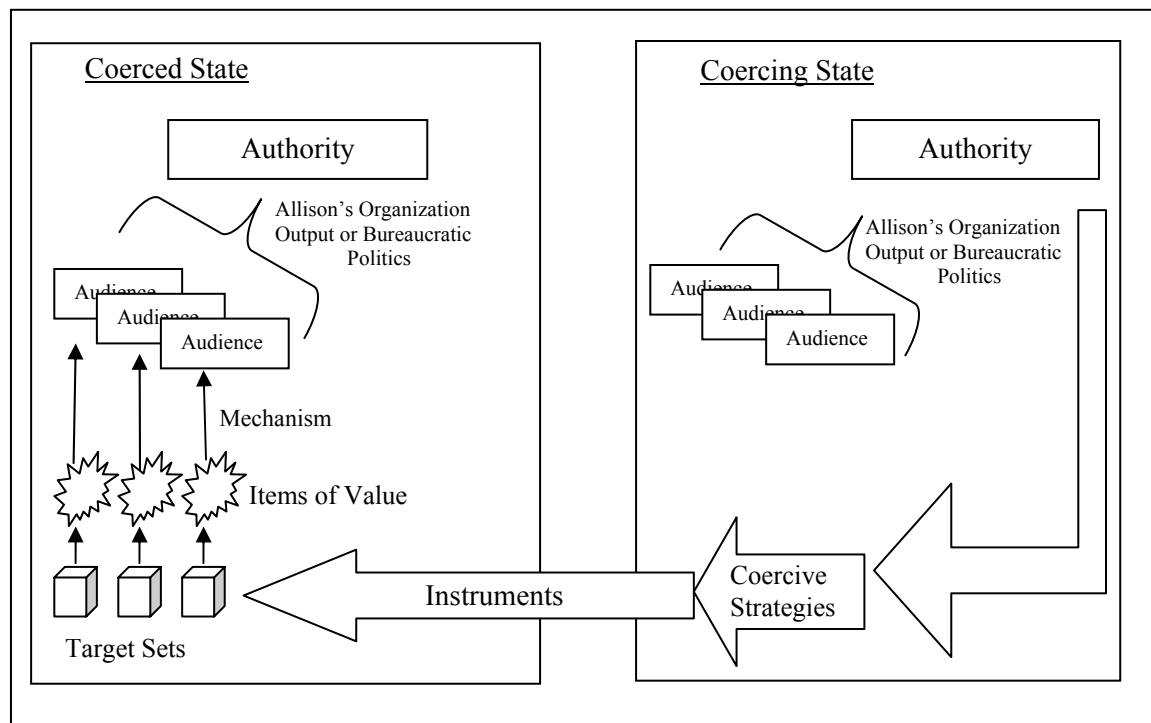
Figure 3 – Multiple Actor Coercion Framework

Unitary Actor vs. Multiple Actor Coercion – Operation Allied Force as a Case Study

The US coercive action against Slobodan Milosevic during Operation Allied Force (OAF) serves as a useful illustration of how the multiple actor coercion framework compares to existing theories of coercion. On 24 March 1999, the United States began military action against Slobodan Milosevic to coerce him to cease his aggression against the Kosovars. Over the course of the bombing campaign, the United States struck a wide range of targets including Bosnian fielded forces, command and control capabilities, military facilities, and dual-use military infrastructure. After seventy-eight days of bombing, Milosevic conceded to US and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) demands.[31]

Analyzing the operation from a unitary actor-based model of coercion yields the following. The United States and NATO viewed Serbian decision-making as a direct extension of Slobodan Milosevic and waged a coercive strategy meant to influence him directly. That strategy included all four instruments of power but, clearly, the military instrument of power, as employed in Operation Allied Force, was the most consequential for Milosevic. Operation Allied Force relied almost exclusively on US and NATO airpower as the instrument of coercion. The target set for that instrument changed over the course of the war in accordance with the mechanism the bombing was expected to unleash.[32] The bombing against Milosevic's military infrastructure and fielded forces was consistent with a combination of punishment and denial strategies meant to both increase the costs and deny the benefits to Milosevic for resisting US and NATO coercion. This coercion, however, was largely ineffective because the targets struck did not affect appropriate items of value for audiences in Serbia.

As the target set increasingly included dual-use infrastructure that affected business and economic holdings of powerful individuals in Serbia, however, the

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[31] United States Department of Defense, *Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report*, 31 January 2000, xvii, on-line, Internet, available at http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/ kaar02072000.pdf, accessed 21 March 2005.

[32] Ibid., 79.

campaign was brought to relatively quick conclusion.[33] This suggests targets were affecting items of value for some key audience in the Serbian decision-making process. By inflicting costs on his key political supporters, the United States pursued a power base erosion mechanism against Milosevic. The importance of this mechanism in concluding the war is acknowledged in US Department of Defense *Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After Actions Report to Congress*, which stated: "Finally, NATO nations employed other economic and political means —enforcing economic sanctions, tightening travel restrictions, freezing financial holdings — that raised the level of anxiety and discontent within Belgrade's power circles."[34] Although the report focuses on the diplomatic and economic instruments of power, the military instrument of power also clearly contributed toward the Serbian elite's anxiety over Milosevic's aggression. For example, the US conducted aerial strikes on the Bor copper smelt, Smerderevo iron works, Sloboda factory, and Zastava automobile plant, all of which were owned by Serbian elites that had the potential to influence Bosnian decision-making.[35]

Of course, it is impossible to state with complete certainty whether any one mechanism was decisive in coercing Serbian audiences. However, the case study is important as an illustration of how the MACF can function and how it differs from coercion based on unitary actors. These differences are summarized in appendix C, which provides a comparison of unitary actor-based coercion and multiple actor-based coercion.

The most significant difference between the current unitary-actor based model of coercion and the MACF is that the former's linkage between targets and the audiences that influence national decision-making is unclear. By contrast, the MACF explicitly connects key audiences with the items they value and the targets that can affect them. In the case of Kosovo, the lack of this clear linkage potentially prolonged the campaign.

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[33] Stephen T. Hosmer, *Why Milosevic Decided to Settle When He Did* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 65-6.

[34] United States Department of Defense, *Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report*, 31 January 2000, 11, on-line, Internet, available from http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/kaar02072000.pdf, accessed 21 March 2005.

[35] Hosmer, 67; *The Kosovo Conflict, Consequences for the Environment and Human Settlements*, United Nations Report From the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) Balkan Task Force, 1999 (Switzerland: United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), 1999), 12-21.

Had the United States employed a multiple actor-based coercion, it could have identified the Serbian elites as key players in national decision-making. With that information, the United States could have identified associated items of values such as wealth and corresponding target sets; in this case the economic infrastructure that provided that wealth. This reasoning could have led the United States and NATO to focus more heavily on the dual-use target set from the beginning of the war and *potentially* shortened the entire campaign.

By merging coercion theory with key concepts of Allison's state decision-making models in this chapter, I have presented a more robust concept of coercion. By incorporating the complexities of state decision-making, the Multiple Actor Coercion Framework is better suited to describe how coercion can be used against real world adversaries such as Iran. However, as the framework requires significant information about the state being coerced, the next chapter will provide a detailed account of organizations, processes, and individuals involved in Iran's state decision-making.

Chapter 2

Iranian Decision-Making

The political system in Iran is characterized by a multitude of loosely connected and generally fiercely competitive power centers, both formal and informal. The former are grounded in the constitution and in governmental regulations and take the form of state institutions and offices. The latter include religious-political associations, revolutionary foundations, and paramilitary organizations aligned with various factions of Iran's clerical leadership.

—Wilfried Buchta
Who Rules in Iran?

This chapter describes the forces that drive state decision-making in Iran. Understanding these forces is a necessary pre-requisite to using the MACF. Iran epitomizes a multiple actor based decision-making process. Iranian decision-making reflects an intricate and fragile balance of power between multiple centers that are governed by elaborate formal and complex informal relationships. Understanding this balance is essential for understanding Iranian decision-making and therefore for formulating any coercive action against Iran. This chapter facilitates such an understanding by describing the historical influences on Iranian decision-making, the political factions that evolved from that history, and the key institutions and personnel involved in contemporary Iranian decision-making.

History

Persian Nationalism and Shiism

The power centers and relationships that drive modern Iranian decision-making have their roots in Iran's history – both ancient and recent. From 550 to 330 BC, the

Persian Empire ruled much of the known world. This created a strong sense of unique cultural identity among Persians.[36] Persian identity remained strong through the fall of the empire and the rise of the Safavid Dynasty over eighteen hundred years later. In the early 1500s, Shah Esmail changed the official religion of the Safavids from Sunni to Shi'a Islam.[37] This was significant for several reasons. First, it created a religious component to the Persians' on-going conflict with the Ottoman Empire, thereby furthering their sense of cultural identity. Second, because of the traditional importance of religious scholars (*ulama*) in Shiism, it institutionalized the role of the clergy in political affairs.[38] In fact, in order to maintain the legitimacy of the dynasty, the Safavids formalized the political role of the *ulama* by granting them special powers, establishing religious institutions to monitor religious activities in the dynasty, and giving them administrative control over charitable organizations as a source of independent funding. These actions established a tradition of power sharing – a diarchy – between the ruling Shah and a powerful, independent religious institution.[39]

Persian identity and the role of the *ulama* in Persian affairs survived the fall of the Safavid dynasty, persisted through the years of European imperialism, and remained a fundamental character of Persian politics through the transition to Iranian statehood. In 1926, Reza Shah Pahlavi became ruler of Iran and, using Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's Turkey as an example, sought to build a stable, secular, industrialized state.[40] The Shah was initially successful in this effort. He created extensive state bureaucracies, developed a robust, state-sponsored industrialized economy, improved education, and promoted

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[36] Elton L. Daniel, *The History of Iran* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), 50.

[37] Ibid., 87.

[38] Vali Nasr, "The Shi'a – Sunni Division," Lecture in NS 4320, *Islamic Fundamentalism*, Naval Postgraduate School, School of International Graduate Studies, Department of National Security Affairs, Monterey, CA, 6 April 2004.

[39] The structure of the Catholic Church can serve as a helpful analogy for understanding the role of the *ulema* in Shiism. Catholicism includes a formal structure of clergy (priests, bishops, cardinals, and the pope) as official sources of religious authority. Catholics typically belong to a specific parish that has a unique "chain of command" from the parishioner to the Pope, who establishes doctrine for the church. This is similar to the *ulema* in Shiism, where individual Muslims select a particular Grand Ayatollah whose life they seek to emulate and whose teachings and edicts they are obliged to follow. Sunnism, by contrast, is more like Protestantism, where a minister serves as a facilitator for a more individual relationship with God. Accordingly, the ulema in Sunnism have less power and are less important to the religion as a whole than they are in Shiism.

[40] Daniel, 87.

secular cultural programs.[41] Over the long term, however, two emerging international social movements would challenge the Shah's efforts.

Islamic Fundamentalism and Communism

The first of these was the Islamic Fundamentalist movement. The Islamist movement began in the early 1900s as a response to European colonial subjugation of Muslims. [42] Early fundamentalist ideas advocated protection of Islam from the harmful secular policies that were being implemented in states such as Iran. As fundamentalism spread, it evolved into a powerful social and political movement. Eventually, it became a threat to secular governments. Governments' attempts to suppress the Islamist movement only justified the Fundamentalists' fears and strengthened the movement.[43] In Iran, clerics who feared the anti-Islamic policies of Reza Shah began teaching fundamentalism in theological universities. Their teachings allowed the clerics to unite against a common enemy and ultimately to create a powerful conservative movement to oppose Reza Shah.

Communism was the second world movement that paralleled Reza Shah's modernization program. As communist ideologies spread in the twentieth century, Iran developed a powerful domestic communist movement. The role of the state in developing Iran's infrastructure and economy, the large number of university-educated citizens, and Iran's proximity to Russia led many Iranians to embrace communism.[44] Communism was important for Iran for two reasons. First, it introduced and legitimized the concepts of revolution and class warfare, which were largely foreign to Shi'a Islam. Second, its secular nature and opposition to monarchist rule fostered an opposition movement to counter both the Shah and the fundamentalists.

The communist and socialist philosophies of the left and the fundamentalist ideologies of the right took root in Iran and became the foundation for its modern political culture.

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[41] Ibid., 135-40.

[42] Vali Nasr, "The Shi'a – Sunni Division," Notes from Lecture in NS 4320, *Islamic Fundamentalism*, Naval Postgraduate School, School of International Graduate Studies, Department of National Security Affairs, Monterey, CA, 6 April 2004. The Islamic Fundamentalism movement is also widely referred to as the Islamist movement. The terms are used interchangeably in this thesis.

[43] Ali, Rahnema, *Pioneers of Islamic Revival* (London: Zed Books Ltd, 1994), 1-5.

[44] Sepehr Zabih, *The Communist Movement in Iran* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1966), 1-7.

Early US – Iranian Relations

As Iran entered the late 1930s, however, the Islamist and communist movements were overshadowed by the looming world war. Iran's geographic location on the boarder of Russia made it a vital route for the Allies' lend-lease program to Russia.[45] Unable to persuade Reza Shah to support the lend-lease effort, the Allies invaded Iran in 1941 and forced Reza Shah to abdicate his throne.[46] He was replaced by his son, Mohammad-Reza Shah, who was more amicable to Allied demands.

The Allies' occupation of Iran during the war and the secular, oppressive policies of Mohammad-Reza Shah after the war, spurred a resurgence of nationalism and a renewal of Islamic Fundamentalism in Iran. By the early 1950s, the Shah faced significant opposition from increasingly popular communist groups and religious factions who disapproved of the Shah's secular policies. Further, many from the left and right were united in their objection to the oil concessions the Shah had granted the United Kingdom.[47] In 1951, the pressure from the groups forced the Shah to accept the Parliament's plan to nationalize UK oil assets in Iran and to elect the plan's sponsor, Mohammad Mosaddeq, to be prime minister.

As Mosaddeq initiated wide-sweeping leftist measures in Iran, the United States and the United Kingdom conspired to overthrow him. For two days in August 1953, crowds recruited and sponsored by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) fought with forces loyal to Mosaddeq. Ultimately, Mosaddeq surrendered and Mohammad-Reza Shah returned to power.[48]

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Iran under the Shah was a key ally of the United States. Domestically, however, the leftist and rightist opposition movements continued to grow, which prompted the Shah to become more aggressive in his oppression.[49] As the cycle of protest and oppression escalated in the 1970s, the Iranian population began to extend its discontent for the Shah to his key supporter, the United States.

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[45] US Department of State, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, *Background Notes: Iran*, updated August 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5314.htm, accessed 9 February 2005.
[46] Daniel, 141.
[47] Ibid., 148-9.
[48] Ibid., 151-5.
[49] Daniel, 156.

Grand Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini was particularly effective at vilifying the US for its support of the Shah and for the threats its culture posed to Islam. Khomeini was an Islamic Fundamentalist who exploited the Shah's authoritarianism to develop the opposition into a full-fledge political movement. Although exiled to Paris in the mid-1960s, Khomeini successfully cultivated the Islamist opposition into an open rebellion through the 1970s, and in 1978 into a full-scale revolution that forced the Shah to flee Iran. In early 1979, Grand Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini returned from exile and established the Islamic Republic of Iran.[50]

Supported by leftists, the rightist religious clergy, and large segments of the oppressed population, Khomeini consolidated his power by purging anti-revolutionary elements and supporting radical revolutionary activities in Iran, including the taking of hostages from the US embassy.[51] This action, along with his efforts to export the Islamic revolution by sponsoring terrorism, led the United States, the United Nations, and a host of other states to isolate Iran by imposing sanctions.

Khomeini's attempts to consolidate power and stabilize the new Islamic state were complicated in 1980 when Iraq, citing violations of a 1975 border agreement, invaded Iran. Initially out matched by an Iraqi army that was superior in training and technology, Khomeini created a massive force of martyrs, the *Basij,* to counter Iraqi attacks with tactics such as human wave assaults and clearing minefields by walking through them.[52] As the war stretched into the mid-1980s, Iran's economy was pushed to the verge of collapse. This, and US assistance to the Iraqi war effort, led to increasing pressure to end the war. In 1988, Hojjatoleslam Rafsanjani, Commander of the Armed Forces, convinced Khomeini to accept a UN-sponsored cease-fire.[53]

The eight-year war with Iraq was extremely costly for Iran. Militarily, what remained of its conventional force was largely destroyed. Politically, the failure of Iran during the Iran-Iraq war ended much of the revolutionary zeal that had accompanied the

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[50] Baqer Moin, "Khomeini's Search for Perfection," in *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*, ed. Ali Rahnema (London: Zed Books Ltd, 1994), 87-95.
[51] Ibid., 87-95.
[52] Daniel, 208.
[53] Ibid., 216.

Islamic Revolution of 1979. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the war had bankrupted the Iranian economy.[54]

In the aftermath of the war, several important Iranian politicians recognized the need to rebuild and reconstruct the Iranian economy. To do so successfully would require Iran to implement substantial political and economic reforms. Throughout the 1990s, Iran experienced a struggle between political forces pushing for political and economic reform and those favoring the existing structures. Conflict between these forces played out in the Presidential and Parliamentary elections of that decade, but ultimately yielded little genuine reform. As a result, Iran continued to face serious economic difficulties as it entered the twenty-first century.

Recently, Iran has sought to improve its image internationally as a pre-requisite step toward improving its economic condition. At the same time, however, Iran has exhibited belligerent rhetoric and provocative actions regarding its development of nuclear technology.[55] The result of these latter actions has been to complicate Iran's ability to exploit the former. Contradictions and inconsistencies such as these are a direct result of the complex balance of power that characterizes Iranian decision-making. As described above, the forces that determine the balance have their origins in Iran's history. Understanding the modern manifestations of those forces is essential to understanding Iranian decision-making.

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[54] Ibid., 211-217.

[55] The United States has repeatedly accused Iran of developing nuclear weapons. Iranian officials, however, have steadfastly denied this charge. They have stated, however, that Iran is justified in its pursuit of peaceful nuclear technology. The issue has become more urgent in light of the International Atomic Energy Agency's findings of "suspicious" uranium isotopes during inspections at Iranian facilities, subsequent Iranian restrictions on such inspections, and Iranian declarations that it is developing the technology to enrich uranium indigenously. See "Remarks on Iran During the IAEA Board of Governors Meeting by IAEA Director General Dr. Mohamed El Baradei, presented in Vienna, Austria, 9 September 2003," n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.iaea.org/search97cgi/s97_cgi?action=View& VdkVgwKey=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Eiaea%2Eorg%2FNewsCenter%2FStatements%2F2003%2Febsp 2003n024%2Ehtml&QueryZip=Iran&&viewTemplate=Iaea%2Fstcvw_smpl.hts&collection=Statements, accessed 10 February 2005. Also see Nasser Karimi, "Iran Vows Not to Abandon Nuclear Progress," *ABC News On-Line*, 10 February 2005, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://abcnews.go.com/international/print?id=487081, accessed 10 February 2005.

Forces in Iranian Decision-Making

Iran's history has produced two dominant forces in Iranian politics: the rightists who grew out of the religious clergy, and the leftist, who evolved from Iran's communist movement. These forces have since splintered into three major political factions that define the political landscape in Iran. The rightist force split into two distinct camps: the Traditional Right and the Modern Right. They are balanced on the left by the Islamic Left faction.[56] These three factions permeate the formal and informal institutions of Iranian decision-making as their members occupy and manipulate the institutions of government; as such, they are fundamental elements of Iranian state decision-making.

Taxonomy of Iranian Political Forces

The taxonomy employed in this thesis provides a valuable way to conceptualize the competing political ideologies in Iran. It is important to realize, however, that the groupings described here are somewhat artificial. The factions are not western-style political parties, they do not follow the definitive leadership of a single individual, and they do not have a formally adopted or publicly proclaimed platform. Rather, they are loose movements differentiated by general political, economic, religious, and cultural convictions.[57]

Traditionalist Right

The Traditional Right is the most conservative element in Iran. This faction favors theocracy; that is, it believes that Islamic law should take precedence over the constitution and the will of the people. Drawing on strict interpretations of Islam and Khomeini-inspired fundamentalism, the Traditional Right believes political parties are unnecessary, that the state should not tolerate open dissent, and that Iranian society should remained relatively closed to protect Islam from the cultural deviance of the

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[56] This taxonomy is a compilation of the categories presented by Wilfried Buchta and Mehdi Moslem. See Wilfried Buchta, *Who Rules Iran? The Structure of power in the Islamic Republic* (Washington D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2000), 11-21 and Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2002). Both Buchta and Mehdi describe a fourth faction, the Neo-fundamentalists, which is comprised of the fringe, extremist elements of the original rightist and leftist movements. However, as they wield very little influence in current decision-making, the faction is not addressed in this thesis.

[57] Moslem, 140.

West.[58] In terms of international relations, the Traditional Right strictly opposes reconciling relations with the United States and has ambiguous views regarding exporting the Islamic revolution by supporting terrorism.

Economically, the Traditional Right supports the concept of private property. It views disparity in wealth and poverty as a religious issue requiring religious, rather than state-managed, solutions. It also supports an economic system based on pre-industrial bazaari capitalism and state subsidies for private corporations. The Traditional Right rejects the concept of state -directed economies and state-controlled businesses.

Not surprisingly, the Traditional Right is comprised of, and supported by, elements of the Iranian population that have conservative religious, cultural, political, and economic views. The most important of these include the traditional Iranian bourgeoisie, the bazaar merchants, the *ulama*, and the segments of the Iranian population that are highly religious.[59]

Among the most influential decision-making officials belonging to the Traditional Right are Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei; Dr. Gholamali Haddad-Adel, Speaker of Parliament; and Ayatollah Mahmoud Shahroudi, Head of the Judiciary.[60] These important Iranian leaders are supported by a variety of religious and political associations. Since political parties are strictly controlled in Iran, these non-governmental associations serve as a means to coordinate and promote political agendas. Among the most important to the conservatives are the Society of Combatant Clergy, the Allied Islamic Society and the Society of Qom Seminary Teachers.[61]

The Traditional Right is also supported by a number of quasi-governmental economic organizations known as *bonyads* (foundations). Originally established after the revolution as charitable organizations to manage and re-distribute the wealth of the Shah's government, the *bonyads* have become tremendously powerful by amassing huge wealth, dominating the Iranian economy, and becoming involved in nearly all aspects of Iranian life. Some estimates suggest the *bonyads* receive over half of the Iranian

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[58] Buchta, 13-6.
[59] Moslem, 47-8.
[60] *Current World Leaders, Third Almanac*, 47:3, October 2004 (Santa Fe: Current World Leaders Press, 2004), 118. See also selected profiles of Iranian leaders at BBC news on line, http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/middle_east/3624621.stm, accessed 20 April 2005.
[61] Moslem, 47-8.

government's annual budget and account for as much as forty percent of the Iranian economy.[62] Despite this wealth, most *bonyads* receive annual payments from the Iranian government and are tax exempt.

Many of the largest *bonyads* are led by influential clerics and most are rife with corruption, nepotism, and abuses of power.[63] In all cases, the *bonyads* are accountable only to the Supreme Leader. Some of the most powerful *bonyads* include the Martyr's Foundation, the Foundation for the Disabled and Oppressed, the Imam Reza Foundation, and the Fifteenth of Khordad Foundation.[64] The massive economic power wielded by the *bonyads*, their reach into the Iranian population, their independence from governmental oversight, and their close connection to the Supreme Leader gives the Traditional Right substantial social, economic, and political power; and thus, significant influence in Iranian decision-making.

Modern Right

The Modern Right split from the Traditional Right over its long-term vision for Iranian economic development and in response to growing social opposition to the hard-line policies of the Traditional Right. The goal of the Modern Right is to transform Iran's existing political and economic institutions to enable Iran to evolve into a prosperous, modern state. The Modern Right was born in 1996 when a group of influential leaders formed an independent organization called the Servants of the Reconstruction to organize support for the economic and cultural reforms being sought by then President Ali Akbar Rafsanjani.

Rafsanjani and the Modern Right supported constitutional laws over Islamic laws, the establishment of western-style political parties, freedom of political expression, and a society open to economic, political, and cultural exchanges with the west.[65] In contrast with the Traditional Right, the Modern Right cautiously supports reconciliation with the United States and opposes sponsorship of terrorism to export the Islamic Revolution.

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[62] "The Structure of Power in Iran, An Overview of the Iranian Government and Political System," *PBS Front Line*, Inside Iran, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/tehran/inside/govt.html, accessed 10 February 2005.
[63] Buchta, 73.
[64] Ibid., 74.
[65] Ibid., 16-7.

Typically referred to as "reformers" by outside observers, the Modern Right is significantly more liberal than the Traditional Right and emphasizes pragmatism over conservatism.[66] The Modern Right views political reform as a necessary pre-requisite to economic reform. It also sees cultural reform as a necessity for the government to retain the support of the people. To bolster the credibility of the government, the Modern Right supports a progressive platform, including women's rights, freedom of the press, representative government and governmental accountability.

The Modern Right desires an advanced, industrialized, capitalist economy that embraces globalization and competes in the world market.[67] These views, along with the Modern Right's relatively liberal social and political positions, attract the support of Iran's industrial groups, the business-focused middle class, professional associations and employer organizations, women, younger voters, and large segments of Iran's disadvantaged population.[68]

The Modern Right established itself as a significant power center in Iran when it won approximately sixty of the 290 seats in the Iranian Parliamentary elections of 1996. The faction then leveraged this victory by forming a coalition with the leftists, who had won approximately thirty seats.[69] Though still outnumbered by the Traditional Right, the new alliance represented a growing political force in Iran. The alliance solidified its power in the 2000 Parliamentary elections where it won, for the first time, an outright majority of the seats.[70]

Today, the Modern Right's most influential members are the head of the Expediency Council, Ali Akbar Rafsanjani and the mayor of Tehran, Gholam-Hosein Karbaschi.[71] The influence these individuals have on Iranian decision-making makes the Modern Right a substantial power center in Iran.

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[66] Moslem, 129.

[67] Ibid., 128.

[68] Buchta, 16-7.

[69] Ibid., 16-7.

[70] "The Structure of Power in Iran, An Overview of the Iranian Government and Political System," *PBS Front Line*, Inside Iran, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/ frontline/shows/tehran/inside/govt.html, accessed 10 February 2005.

[71] In the later 1990s, Rafsanjani began a move toward the Traditional Right. As a result, there are differing opinions as to whether he belongs to the Traditional Right or the Modern Right.

Islamic Left

Deeply influenced by Iran's experience with communism and Khomeini's uprising, the Islamic left represents a blend of state-centrism and revolutionary Islam. Generally, it opposes the Traditional Right's positions and, in terms of social and religious issues, is similar to the Modern Right. The Islamic Left believes the state is superior to Islam in terms of establishing law and re-distributing wealth. As one might expect, it supports a command economy and government subsidies to businesses.[72]

Since the death of Grand Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989, the Islamic Left's positions on revolution and state-control have moderated, becoming similar to the Modern Right's. The pace of that moderation accelerated when the left allied itself with the Modern Right in 1996 and with the landslide victory of Sayyid Mohammad Khatami in the 1997 Presidential election. Receiving nearly seventy percent of the popular vote and the overwhelming support of a broad cross section of the Iranian population, Khatami's victory was seen as a mandate to pursue an agenda of liberal political, cultural, and economic reform.[73] Despite difficulties implementing that agenda (to be discussed later), the Modern Right-Islamic Left reform movement continued to grow; as shown by the results of the 2000 Parliamentary elections and the 2001 Presidential elections. In a staggering defeat for the Traditional Right, reformist candidates won over seventy percent of the seats in the 2000 Parliamentary elections and President Khatami was re-elected with nearly eighty percent of the popular vote in the 2001 election. In both elections, record numbers of citizens cast votes. The transition of power in the legislature from the Traditional Right to the Modern Right-Islamic Left alliance and the re-election of Khatami as president placed two of the three branches of government in the hands of reformers and vested them with a popular mandate for reform.[74]

The Islamic Left is supported by groups that favor revolutionary Islam and communism. For instance, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which was originally established to protect the Islamic Revolution and its achievement, has

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[72] Moslem, 111-5.
[73] Behzad Yaghmaian, *Social Change in Iran, An Eyewitness Account of Dissent, Defiance, and New Movements for Rights* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 8-9.
[74] "The Structure of Power in Iran, An Overview of the Iranian Government and Political System," *PBS Front Line*, Inside Iran, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/ frontline/shows/tehran/inside/govt.html, accessed 10 February 2005.

traditionally supported the Islamic Left. Similarly, given the prevalence of revolutionary and communist thought in Iranian universities, a fair number of student groups support the Islamic Left. Finally, the lefts' control of several *bonyads*, including Martyr's Bonyad*,* one of the most powerful in Iran, assures resources and serves as an effective means to cultivate and maintain grass roots support.[75]

The Left's success in the elections since 1996 has bolstered the formal and informal power of its leaders. Today, the Islamic Left's most important members are the current President, Mohammed Khatami; Abdullah Nouri, one of Khatami's former Vice Presidents and, later, Chairman of Tehran's City Council; and Reza Khatami, younger brother of Mohammed Khatami and the member of parliament who received more votes than any other candidate in Parliamentary history.[76]

Given its sway with such important government organizations as the IRGC, the economic and social influence of the Martyr's Bonyad and the power of its recently attained public offices, the Islamic Left has become of fundamental importance to Iranian decision-making.

This taxonomy of political factions is clearly a heuristic simplification. None of the factions should be considered immutable as members, even important leaders, often cross the artificial boundaries separating factions for political reasons. The creation of the Modern Right from the Traditional Right and the alliance between the Modern Right and Islamic Left are important examples of the fluidity of Iran's political landscape. Nonetheless, provided one is aware of its limitations, the taxonomy presents a particularly useful way to describe the political forces that drive Iranian decision-making. A summary of the Iranian political factions appears in appendix D.

These factions wield their power by occupying and manipulating the formal institutions of Iranian government.

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[75] Although the IRGC is typically seen as an instrument of the Supreme Leader in support policies of the Traditional Right, the IRGC's existence has been defined by efforts to export Khomeini's Islamic Revolution (e.g., providing training, resources, and support to Hamas in Palestine and Hezbollah in Lebanon). Among the rank and file of the IRGC, these activities are more inline with the Islamic Left, who until the mid-1990s favored policies to export the revolution, than with the Traditional Right, who typically do not favor efforts to export the revolution. See Buchta, 67-72.

[76] "The Structure of Power in Iran, An Overview of the Iranian Government and Political System," *PBS Front Line*, Inside Iran, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/tehran/inside/govt.html, accessed 10 February 2005.

Formal Institutions of Iranian Decision-Making

As its name suggests, the Islamic Republic of Iran is a blend of republican and Islamic principles. The constitution, drafted in 1979 and amended in 1989, established a structure of institutions that separates power among executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. More importantly, however, it also separated power between secular and religious authorities, where the former is clearly subordinate to the latter. To ensure the new state represented the values of Islam, the constitution created a power structure that gave the religious clergy final say in the government's activities. The clergy's power is not, however, unlimited; and the secular institutions have on occasion been successful in driving state decision-making. The relationships between the formal institutions of government are shown in appendix E, and are described below.

The Supreme Leader of the Revolution

The most powerful governmental position in Iran is the office of the Supreme Leader, who is appointed for life by the Assembly of Experts (described below) to serve as the supreme political and religious authority for Iran. As such, the Supreme Leader provides guidance for Iran's domestic and foreign policies. He also commands the armed forces, intelligence organizations, and security services. The Supreme Leader wields his vast power through several governmental institutions, the most important of which is the Clerical Commissars. The commissars are personal representatives of the Supreme Leader assigned to every government institution. They have complete authority to intervene in any matter on behalf of the Supreme Leader.[77] The commissars are even more powerful than the President's ministers and give the Supreme Leader an unrivaled means to influence activities in the executive branch of government.

In the aftermath of the 1979 revolution, the religious stature of Grand Ayatollah Khomeini permitted him to fill the office of the Supreme Leader as the sole source of guidance for all religious and political matters (*vali-ye faqih*) for the state.[78] After Khomeini's death, however, his successor Ayatollah Ali Khamenei lacked the religious qualifications to continue this practice and the authority of the office was significantly

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[77] Buchta, 8.
[78] Moslem, 15.

reduced.[79] Still, the office of the Supreme Leader remains, both the constitutional and *de facto,* the most powerful institution in the Iranian government; as such he is a critical actor in national decision-making. A list of the Supreme Leader's powers is presented in appendix F.

The President

The second most powerful office in Iran is the President. The President is elected by the people for a maximum of two, four-year terms. Although subordinate to the Supreme Leader, the constitution and public law grant the president important powers including leadership of the High Council on National Security (HCNS) and Central Bank as well as responsibility for managing the nation's economy.[80] The President exercises his powers as head of the executive branch through its twenty-two ministries. He is supported in this effort by eight vice presidents. The formal power of the current President, Mohammad Khatami, is buttressed by his overwhelming popular support. The unique combination of popular mandate for political, economic, and religious reform, and significant formal power make President Khatami a key individual in Iranian decision-making. The President's powers are listed in appendix F.

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[79] Gregory F. Giles, "The Crucible of Radical Islam: Iran's Leaders and Strategic Culture" in *Know Thy Enemy, Profiles of Adversary Leaders and Their Strategic Cultures*, 2d ed., eds. Barry R. Schneider and Jerrold M. Post (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 2003), 142. Shiism defines five religious qualifications. The lowest ranking, and most common, is cleric of which there are approximately 180,000 in Iran and 4,000 serving in government positions. The fourth highest level of clergy is the Hojjatoleslam. There are approximately 28,000 in Iran, including President Khatami, former President Rafsanjani, and Speaker of Parliament Nateq-Nuri. The third highest rank is the Ayatollah. There are approximately 5000 Ayatollahs world wide, including Supreme Leader Khamenei. Ayatollah 'ozma (or Grand Ayatollah) is the second highest level of clergy. Promotion to the Grand Ayatollah is an informal process requiring decades of religious study and consensus among existing Grand Ayatollahs. Despite several attempts to claim the title, Khamenei has failed to achieve the status of Grand Ayatollah. There are approximately twenty grand ayatollahs worldwide. Khomeini was a Grand Ayatollah. The highest clergy level in Shiism is Marja-e taqlid-e motlaq (Absolute Source of Emulation). This office, analogous to the Catholic Pope, has been empty since 1961. See Buchta, 54.

[80] See articles 46, 126, and 176 of the *Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from www.ir.online.com/iran-info/government/constitituion, accessed on 11February 2005.

The Parliament

The Iranian Parliament (*majles*) is responsible for drafting Iran's legislation, ratifying international treaties, and approving the President's annual budget.[81] The Speaker of Parliament can be influential in Iranian decision-making. However, this influence depends more on the Speaker's personal charisma and stature than on the authorities of his formal office. The power of the Parliament as a whole stems from two sources: first, its role in the system of constitutional checks and balances and second, its representation of the population.

The Parliament has been willing and able to exert itself to check the power of the executive branch of government. For example, in President Rafsanjani's first term of office, the Parliament repeatedly undermined his economic reform initiatives by refusing to pass corresponding legislation.[82] Parliament's second source of power is its representation of the Iranian population, which, as shown by the 1996 and 2000 elections, can be significant. In as much as the members of Parliament possess a mandate from the people, the legislature has the ability to influence Iranian decision-making. Ironically, the Parliament's second source of power is often self-limiting. As the Parliament comes to represent a more diverse section of the Iranian population, its members begin to compete to advance their constituent's agendas. This competition leads to factional infighting that, as in any representative body, hampers the ability of the legislature to speak with a unified voice. This, in turn, limits its ability to influence state decision-making. A list of Parliaments powers is provided in appendix F.

Council of Guardians

In addition to such self-induced reduction of influence, Parliament's power is further and much more significantly constrained by the Supreme Leader's Council of Guardians. Although established as an organization of the legislative branch of government, the Council of Guardians is, in reality, an instrument of the office of the Supreme Leader and, by extension, the Traditional Right. The Council is comprised of

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[81] See articles 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, and 52 of the *Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from www.ir.online.com/iran-info/government/constitituion, accessed on 11February 2005.

[82] Akbar Karbassian, "Islamic Revolution and the Management of the Iranian Economy," *Social Research* 67, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 635.

twelve jurists. Six of the jurists are appointed directly by the Supreme Leader, while the remaining six are recommended by the Head of the Judiciary (himself, a direct appointee of the Supreme Leader) and formally approved by the Parliament. This organizational arrangement virtually assures the Council remains a tool of the Traditional Right.

The constitution grants the Council significant power. Most importantly, it prevents the Parliament from taking action when the Council is not in session, grants the Council of Guardians the power to review all laws passed by the Parliament, and allows the council to reject any law it determines to be inconsistent with the principles of Islam.[83] This power gives the Council of Guardians a virtual veto over all actions of the Parliament. The Council has not been shy in wielding its power since the Revolution. For example, over the first seven years of Khatami's two presidential terms, the Council of Guardians vetoed 111 of 297 Parliamentary bills.[84] The council also has the authority to approve all candidates running for election to the Parliament, the Assembly of Experts, or the Presidency. The Council used this authority to wrest power from the reformist movement within the legislature in the wake of the 1996 and 2000 elections. By disqualifying nearly 2,500 reformist candidates, including over eighty sitting members of Parliament, the Council set the stage for the Traditional Right's return to Parliamentary dominance in the 2004 elections.[85] Although not positioned to participate in state decision-making directly, the Council of Guardians is clearly important in influencing the institutions that are. This is significant given the Traditional Right's near unassailable hold on the Council. A list of the Council of Guardian's powers is in appendix F.

Assembly of Experts

The Traditional Right also maintains a firm grasp on Iran's Assembly of Experts. Eighty-six Council of Guardian-approved candidates are elected by the public to eight-year terms on the assembly. Based in Qom, the Assembly's prime responsibilities are to

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[83] See articles 91 - 99 of the *Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from www.ir.online.com/iran-info/government/constitituion, accessed on 11February 2005.

[84] "Ali Gheissari and Vali Nasr, "Iran's Democracy Debate," Middle East Policy XI, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 100.

[85] "Their Last Chance? – Iran (The State of Iran), *The Economist* 370, no. 8358, (17 January 2004): 20; Morad Saghafi, "The New Landscape of Iranian Politics," *The Middle East Research and Information Project On Line Report 233*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.merip.org/mer/mer233/saghafi.html, accessed 13 February 2005.

impeach the Supreme Leader if it determines him to be unqualified and to elect a new Supreme Leader from its ranks following the death or impeachment of the Supreme Leader. Like the Council of Guardians, the Assembly of Experts is rarely involved in decision-making directly, however most members of the Assembly hold other positions in Iran's decision-making structure. It is worth noting that, while the Assembly's place in Iran's government is constitutionally protected, if voter participation is any indication, Iranian popular support may be decreasing for the Assembly. In the Assembly's first election in 1982, over seventy-five percent of eligible voters participated. In the second and third elections, however, only thirty-seven and forty-six percent of eligible voters participated, respectively.[86] In a country where voter participation is traditionally very high, such numbers indicate apathy among the population for the Assembly.

Of the remaining governmental institutions in Iran, two are particularly important – although neither directly participate in decision-making. The first, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), is important because of its fragile relationship with the current government in Iran; the second, the Supreme Leader's offices, because of its rock-solid grip on the government.

The IRGC is the most powerful military force in Iran. However, it is also more a revolutionary political force than a professional military force.[87] The IRGC responds directly to the Supreme Leader, making Iran the only country in the world whose executive branch of government does not control its military.[88] This has led to confrontations regarding reform. President Rafsanjani's attempts to curtail the power of the IRGC by merging it with Iran's regular army (A*rtesh*) were undermined by the Supreme Leader. Further, the IRGC continued to support terrorist activities abroad despite Rafsanjani's efforts to curtail them.[89] The tension between the IRGC and the reform movement intensified under President Khatami when the head of the IRGC, Moshen Reza'i openly supported Khatami's conservative opponent, Nateq-Nuri in the 1997 Presidential elections. Because of the public nature of Reza'i's pronouncement, Khatami was able to pressure the Supreme Leader to replace him. Still, in 1999 after

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[86] Buchta, 61.
[87] Ibid., 69.
[88] The Supreme Leader directs both the regular military (*the Artesh*) and the IRGC. See Buchta, 23.
[89] Buchta, 70.

widespread student protests against new laws limiting freedom of the press, over twenty senior leaders of the IRGC threatened to overthrow Khatami if he did not quell the protests. Only after Khatami threatened to resign did the Supreme Leader direct the commander of the IRGC, publicly to reaffirm the IRGC's loyalty to Khatami.[90]

Such episodes demonstrate the volatility of the IRGC. Given its substantial military capability, its anti-reformist mindset, and its willingness to intervene in government affairs to impose its view of proper Iranian policies, the IRGC, and its paramilitary Islamic-Law enforcement forces, the *Basij*, are powers that influence Iranian decision-making.

The second of the remaining government institutions are the offices of the Supreme Leader. The constitution establishes the Supreme Leader as the authority over a significant portion of Iran's government. These offices allow the Supreme Leader to direct Iran's policies by manipulating the executive and legislative branches of government and by controlling the Iranian public. For example, the Supreme Leader appoints the Head of the Judiciary, who in turn appoints the Head of the Supreme Court, the chief public prosecutor and the six lay jurists of the Council of Guardians. These appointments provide the Supreme Leader tools to control who reaches public office and how the law is interpreted and enforced in Iran. The Supreme Leader also appoints the director of Iranian television and radio services, which allows the leader to manipulate state information and propaganda. The Supreme Leader's authority to appoint the commander of the *Artesh*, the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Commander of Law Enforcement Forces, and the Commander of the IRGC, give him control of the instruments of national defense, and more importantly, domestic repression. Finally, the Supreme Leader maintains the Clerical Commissars (discussed previously) and appoints the head of the Expediency Council, which exists to arbitrate disputes between the Parliament and the Council of Guardians and to serve as the Supreme Leader's prime advisor on legal and legislative matters.[91]

Control of these offices ensures that the Iranian government remains under the control of the Supreme Leader. Given that the Supreme Leader's views are virtually

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[90] Ibid. 189-90.
[91] Today, this office is even more significant because it is headed by the influential former president Rafsanjani.

synonymous with the Traditional Right's, the office must be seen as a permanent institutionalization of power for the Traditional Right. Despite this power, the Modern Right and Islamic Left have managed to wrest some power through popular elections. However, as shown by the 2004 Parliamentary elections, the Traditional Rights' is certainly willing to use its authority to approve elections candidates to regain these offices.[92]

The checks and balances created by shared power between the factions and across the institutions of Iranian government create a unique process of state decision-making in Iran. See appendix G for a list of offices currently held by each of the political faction.

Decision-Making Processes

Despite the myriad forces and organizations involved, Iranian decision-making is based on a clearly delineated process.[93] When presented with a situation requiring a national decision, the President sends a summary of the situation to his cabinet to obtain the views of its ministers. For issues of national defense, the High Council on National Security considers recommendations of the cabinet and develops a proposed course of action, which is approved by the President and submitted to the Supreme Leader for confirmation. Once confirmed, the Supreme Leader and President direct their respective institutions to implement the decision.

This description is valuable in that it shows the formal elements of Iranian governmental action. Appendix H includes a diagram of the governmental information flow and decision implementation. Combining this process with an understanding of the informal elements of policy development, allows one to begin to comprehend the full nature of Iranian decision-making.

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[92] In 2004, fearing the growing power of the reform movement, the Supreme Leader supported the Council of Guardian's ban of over 4,000 candidates for Parliament, most of whom were pro-reform. See "Their Last Chance? – Iran (The State of Iran)," *The Economist* 370, no. 8358 (17 January 2004).

[93] This description draws heavily on Abbas Maleki's description of Iranian state decision-making. See Abbas Malek, "Decision Making In Iran: A Heuristic Approach," *Journal of Social Affairs* 19, no. 73 (Spring 2002): 39-53. Maleki has extensive experience in Iranian decision-making. Among his many activities, Maleki is Chairman of the International Institute for Caspian Studies. He is also the editor of Hamshahri Daily, a newspaper in Iran with ties to the Modern Right. Maleki serves as advisor to several government ministers and is a member of several think tanks. For a listing of Maleki's previous and current associations, see http://www.caspianstudies.com/academ/maleki.htm.

Awareness of several other characteristics of Iranian decision-making helps complete the description of Iranian decision-making. First, in recent years Iranian decision-making has generally become more pragmatic. That is, *realpolitik* is replacing revolutionary Islamic ideological as the prime motivator for Iranian actions.[94] Second, Iranian decision-making, especially in crisis situations, tends to be relatively slow and inflexible.[95] Third, Iranian culture generally desires consensus in decision-making. Accordingly, when at all possible, decision-makers will go to great length to avert irreconcilable differences. This creates a delicate balance – in effect, a diarchy of shared power – between the formal and constitutional power of the Office of the Supreme Leader and Traditional Right and the informal and popular power of the President, where neither can completely disregard the other and neither is able to implement completely their preferred policy agenda.[96]

The characterization of Iranian decision-making presented above is clearly a simplification. However, when combined with an appreciation for the important governmental offices, the three dominant political factions, and the key individuals in Iranian politics, one develops a more complete picture of Iranian state decision-making. Interestingly, despite the unique institutions and ideologies in Iran, that picture highlights the very aspects of multiple actor decision-making Allison describes in United States decision-making during the Cold War.

Allison's Models of State Decision-Making in Iran

Allison's organization process and bureaucratic models have clearly been present in post-revolutionary Iranian decision-making: for example, the IRGC's decision to continue support for Hamas and Hezbollah despite the President's direction to cease such support. Since the IRGC was established to protect the accomplishments of the Islamic Revolution, it is easy to see how its leaders may have viewed the reformist policies as contrary to their parochial interests. Therefore it responded by continuing its support for the terrorists.

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[94] Daniel Byman, Shahram Chubin, Anoushiravan Ehteshami, and Jerrold Green, *Iran's Security Policy in the Post-Revolutionary Era* (Santa Monica: RAND Publications, 2001), xiv.
[95] Malek, 39-53.
[96] Buchta, 189-90.

In a second example, the Fifteenth of Khordad Foundation (*bonyad*) announcement that it had increased the bounty on Salman Rushdie after President Khatami's declared publicly that the religious edict (*fatwa*) ordering Rushdie's assassination was invalid.[97] In this case, the *bonyad* acted to promote the political interests of the Traditional Right by undermining Khatami's liberalization policies.

The third example is the Council of Guardian's nullification of over thirty percent of President Rafsanjani's reform agenda. In this case, the Council of Guardian's responded to what it perceived as threatening change by executing a standard procedure, the veto, to promote its parochial interests. At the same time, the Council was employed as an instrument of the Supreme Leader to maintain his stature by undercutting the growing political power of President Rafsanjani.

These three examples illustrate the degree to which Iranian decision-making is the product of multiple actors. That insight, combined with an understanding of the history that created the political forces represented by these actors, go far toward explaining Iranian decision-making. These same dynamics can be seen in Iranian decision-making as relates to its pursuit of nuclear technology.

Motivation for Pursuing Nuclear Weapons

In the MACF, an audience chooses to comply or to resist coercion by comparing the costs and benefits it expects to realize by complying with or resisting the adversary's demands. In the case of Iran and US coercion, the common element in each audience's comparison is Iran's nuclear program. That is, each audience measures the potential gains of keeping Iran's nuclear program against expected costs of US retribution or the potential costs of giving up Iran's nuclear program against expected benefit from the United States. Given that Iran's nuclear program is at the very heart of the audience's decision calculus, it is important to understand the benefits its nuclear program is perceived as providing Iran.

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[97] Ibid., 146.

States pursue nuclear weapons for three primary reasons: as a response to security threats, as a function of domestic politics, and in pursuit of international status.[98] In the case of Iran, it appears as though all three reasons are pushing Iran to pursue nuclear weapons.

Security Threat

Merely one year after the founding of the Islamic Republic, Iran found itself in a brutal struggle for survival. Iran suffered significant losses during its eight-year war with Iraq, which included Iraqi use of chemical weapons against Iran. In the aftermath of that war, Iran has sought to develop a deterrent that would prevent similar wars in the future.[99] In recent years, despite the removal of Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq, Iran's security threats have arguably increased. One of Iran's archenemies, Israel, is widely believed to possess nuclear weapons. Iran's other archenemy, the United States, has, over the past thirteen years, steadily increased its military presence in countries neighboring Iran. In two of those countries, the United States has successful toppled the ruling Islamic regimes. Further, the United States has initiated an aggressive campaign of rhetoric towards Iran regarding its sponsorship of terrorism and pursuit of weapons of mass destruction.[100]

Iran also faces traditional insecurities with respect to Turkey, Pakistan, and Russia.[101] Possession of nuclear weapons would provide Iran a viable and affordable defense against all of these threats. Such thinking is popular among the Traditional Right who view other countries, and the west in particular, with distrust.

Domestic Politics

The second reason states pursue nuclear weapons is for domestic political reasons. Again, evidence suggests this rationale applies to Iran. Among Iran's conservatives,

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[98] Scott D. Sagan, "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996/97): 54-86.

[99] Ray Takeyh, "Iranian Options," *The National Interest* 73 (Fall 2003): 53.

[100] In the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks attains the Untied States, numerous public statements for high-level US officials have specifically identified Iran as a threat to the United States due its sponsorship of terrorism and pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. In particular, the 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005 State of the Union address have all targeted Iran. See the official web site of the White House, http://www.whitehouse.gov/.

[101] Geoffrey Kemp, "How to Stop the Iranian Bomb," *The National Interest* 72 (Summer 2003), 50-2.

pursuit of nuclear weapons gives the military and state organizations (largely dominated by the conservatives) power. Among the reformists, nuclear technology promises a cheap energy source Iran can exploit to meet to projected future energy needs.[102] With nearly sixty-five percent of Iran's population below the age of twenty-five, Iran is likely to experience a dramatic increase in domestic energy needs in the near future. Meeting these needs with oil-based sources of energy would likely detract from Iran's oil export capability and, in the process, inhibit growth in the Iranian economy. Given this, it is easy to see why reform-minded politicians would support efforts to develop affordable energy.[103]

International Status

The third reason states pursue nuclear weapons is to obtain international status. Once more, Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons is logically explained by this rationale. Iran's traditional sense of Persian nationalism and its role as a major regional power create a self-image of importance for Iranians. Anecdotal evidence supports this idea. In remarks to a British Broadcasting Company reporter, a professor of political science at Tehran University declared that compromising on Iranian's nuclear program would hurt Iran's pride. The reporter concluded that the "nuclear power seems to be increasingly bound up with Iran's self image."[104]

This assessment is consistent with Iran's traditional view of itself as leader of the Islamic faith. Of all the Islamic fundamentalist movements throughout the Muslim world, only Iran was successful in establishing an Islamic state. This created a sense of Islamic leadership in Iran that would be bolstered if Iran were to increase its international standing by developing nuclear weapons.

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[102] Reformers clearly differential between the pursuit of nuclear weapons and the development of nuclear technology. Unfortunately, Iran faces difficulty convincing the world community that it can restrict its nuclear ambitions to peaceful uses only. See Nasser Karimi, "Iran Vows Not to Abandon its Nuclear Progress," *ABCNews Online*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory?id=487081, accessed 13 February 2005.

[103] "Iran the Struggle for Change," *BBC News On-Line,* n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in_depth/middle_east/2000/iran_elections/iran_struggle_for_change/changing_face/role_of_youth.stm, accessed 20 April 2005.

[104] Frances Harrison, "Iranians United Over Nuclear Row", *BBCNews Online*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/3758762.stm, accessed 13 February 2005.

The multiple motivations for Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons complicate the development of any potential US counterproliferation coercion strategy. They do not, however, make developing such a strategy impossible. The key to developing a successful counterproliferation strategy for Iran is to understand the nature of state decision-making in Iran. As this chapter has shown, Iranian decision-making has its roots in four major phenomenon: Iran's Persian and Shi'a history; the interaction of the Traditional Right, Modern Right, and Islamic Left political factions; the diarchic governmental structure that blends theocracy and republicanism; and the multiple actor nature of the government.

As the next chapter will show, a successful strategy for coercing Iran can be developed by combining the Multiple Actor Coercion Framework with the unique aspects of Iranian decision-making.

Chapter 3

Coercing Iran

Iran aggressively pursues these weapons [of mass destruction] and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom.

President George W. Bush
State of the Union Address, 29 January 2002

States like [Iran, North Korea, and Iraq], and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. . . . And all nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security.

The National Security Strategy of the United States of America,
17 September 2002

For the sake of security and peace, world leaders will continue to discuss ways to make sure that Iran does not have a nuclear weapon.

President George W. Bush, Mainz, Germany
23 February 2005

In the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, US national security strategy has centered on countering the proliferation of nuclear weapons and opposing states' efforts to develop nuclear weapons indigenously.[105] As part of that

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[105] See the *National Security Strategy of the United States,* 17 September 2002 and the *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction,* December 2002, as well as all four State of the Union addresses since 2002.

strategy, the United States has labeled states that possess weapons of mass destruction and that sponsor terrorism as its most serious security threat. This has placed Iran squarely at the center of US security concerns. To address the threat posed by Iran, the United States has been engaged in a coercion campaign to persuade Iran to abandon its support for terrorism and dissuade it from developing nuclear weapons. To date, however, it appears this campaign has been largely ineffective. Despite extensive economic and diplomatic sanctions and aggressive rhetoric, Iran continues to support terrorism and pursue threatening nuclear technology.[106]

This chapter uses the MACF to outline a strategy for successfully coercing Iran with respect to its pursuit of nuclear weapons. The chapter begins with a brief review of the current coercion campaign. It then draws upon the description of Iranian decision-making presented in chapter 2 to link specific entities and organizations to the components of the MACF developed in chapter 1. The chapter concludes by integrating the components to propose a comprehensive strategy for coercing Iran.

US Coercion Efforts to date

In response to the 1979 revolution and seizure of the US embassy, the United States imposed diplomatic and economic sanctions against the new Islamic Republic of Iran. In November 1979, President Jimmy Carter issued Executive Order 12170 to declare a national emergency with respect to Iran. The executive order authorized the United States to seize all Iranian government assets held in the United States.[107] These economic sanctions were supported by two US-sponsored United Nations Security Council Resolutions calling on Iran to release the US hostages being held in Tehran.[108]

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[106] The US State Department *Patterns of Global Terrorism for 2003* declares that Iran remained the most active sponsor of terrorism. See US Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, April 2004, on-line, Internet, available from http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/31932.pdf, accessed 25 February 2005, 88. See also, "Preventing Iran from Acquiring Nuclear Weapons," Remarks by Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John R. Bolton to the Hudson Institute, Washington D.C., 17 August, 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.state.gov/t/us/rm/35281.htm, accessed 25 February 2005.

[107] Executive Order 12170 – Blocking Iranian Government Property, US National Archives and Records Administration, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/codification/executive_order/12170.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[108] See United Nations Security Council Resolutions 457 and 461 in the United Nations Online Documents Library, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/370/75/IMG/NR037075.pdf?OpenElement, accessed 25 February 2005.

In April 1980, President Carter severed diplomatic ties with Iran and issued a second executive order to prohibit nearly all economic transactions and trade between businesses and individuals in the United States and Iran.[109] Shortly after President Ronald Reagan assumed office in January 1981, he sought to revoke these prohibitions in an attempt to normalize relations with Iran. However, since the United States and Iran were not successful in restoring diplomatic ties the prohibitions remained in place.

Throughout the 1980s, US-Iranian relations steadily deteriorated. In 1987, as punishment for Iran's support of terrorism, President Reagan intensified US pressure on Iran by imposing additional import restrictions on Iranian goods. In October 1992, President George H. W. Bush increased the diplomatic and economic measures against Iran by implementing the Iran-Iraq Non-Proliferation Act, which restricted all US exports of missile technology, conventional arms, and dual-use nuclear technology items to Iran. The Act also authorized the imposition of US sanctions against third party nations trading such items to Iran.[110]

President William Clinton explicitly broadened US action against Iran to address its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Citing continued support for terrorism and the pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, President Clinton imposed additional sanctions in 1995 to eliminate virtually all trade with Iran and prohibit US investment in Iranian oil infrastructure.[111] These policies were codified in the U.S. Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA) of 1996, which required the executive branch of the US government to impose

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[109] Executive order 12205 – Prohibiting certain transactions with Iran, US National Archives and Records Administration, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/codification/executive_order/12205.html, accessed 25 February 2005. Executive Order 12205 was modified slightly ten days later by Executive Order 12211 – Further prohibitions on transactions with Iran. See http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/codification/executive_order/12111.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[110] Mehrdad Valibeigi, "Law of Unintended Consequences: US Sanctions and Iran's Hardliners," *Middle East Report Information Project Online, Report Number 12804*, 28 January 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.merip.org/mero/mero012804.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[111] US Department of Energy. *Country Analysis Brief: Iran, August 2004*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/iran.html, accessed 25 February 2005; U.S. Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Asset Control, *What you Need to Know About U.S. Economic Sanctions: An Overview of O.F.A.C Regulations involving Sanctions against Iran*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sanctions/t11iran.pdf, accessed 25 February 2005.

sanctions on non-US companies that invested more than twenty million in the Iranian oil and natural gas industries.[112]

Notwithstanding a slight loosening of restrictions in 2000 and 2003, the United States has maintained its economic and diplomatic pressure against Iran in an attempt to change its policies on nuclear weapons and terrorism.[113] In July 2001, the United States renewed the ILSA for five additional years. Similarly, in March and November 2004, President George Bush extended for one year President Clinton's 1995 sanctions and President Carter's State of National Emergency with respect to Iran.[114]

Despite the considerable and sustained economic and diplomatic pressure imposed on the Islamic republic, the United States has been unsuccessful in its attempts to coerce Iran with respect to its pursuit of nuclear weapons.[115] Diplomatically, the US attempts to isolate Iran have been undermined by relatively close ties between Iran and the European Union and Iran's strengthening ties with its regional Arab neighbors. By most estimates, the US attempt to isolate Iran has completely failed.[116] In fact, it can be

[112] US Department of Energy. *Country Analysis Brief: Iran, August 2004*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/iran.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[113] In 2000, the United States loosened trade restrictions on select luxury items (e.g., Persian carpets) in an attempt to exploit the Modern-Right-Islamic Left reform successes in Iran to improve US-Iranian relations. In 2003, investment restrictions were lifted for ninety days to allow US citizens to support the international relief effort conducted in the aftermath of the Bam earthquake, which killed over forty-thousand people. The United States government also provided direct financial aid to Iran for that effort. See U.S. Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Asset Control, *What you Need to Know About U.S. Economic Sanctions, An overview of O.F.A.C Regulations involving Sanctions against Iran*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sanctions/t11iran.pdf, accessed 25 February 2005 and Mehrdad Valibeigi, "Law of Unintended Consequences: US Sanctions and Iran's Hardliners," *Middle East Report Information Project Online, Report Number 12804*, 28 January 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.merip.org/mero/mero012804.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[114] US Department of Energy. *Country Analysis Brief: Iran, August 2004*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/iran.html, accessed 25 February 2005; George W. Bush, "Notice Continuation of the National Emergency with Respect to Iran," Office of the Press Secretary, 9 November 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases /2004/11/20041109-16.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[115] The fact that Iran has violated its commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and has an acknowledged uranium enrichment program is an indication of its resistance to US coercion regarding the development of nuclear technology. See *Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Report by the Director General, GOV/203/63, 26 August 2003, Derestricted 12 September 2003,* n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Board/ 2003/gov2003-63.pdf, accessed 10 March 2005.

[116] Wilfried Buchta, *Who Rules Iran? The Structure of power in the Islamic Republic* (Washington D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2000), 134.

argued that these efforts have harmed the United States while strengthening the position of Iran economically and politically.

Economically, in the years the sanctions have been in place, US trade exports to Iran fell from a high of over one billion dollars in 1983 to a low of eight million in 2001.[117] Further, between 1990 through 2002, Iran's Gross Domestic Product averaged an annual growth of over six percent compared to just over two percent for the United States.[118] Politically, the on-going US coercion is strengthening the Traditional Right's hold on power in Iran to the determent of the more moderate factions – e.g., the Modern Right-Islamic Left reform coalition. The U.S. economic sanctions have justified the Traditional Rights' policies of government subsidies and nationalization of industries as a means to promote economic growth. As a result, the Traditional Right's clerics, who manage the majority of national industries through the *bonyads*, have increased their political power in Iran.[119]

The most significant and obvious indication of the failures of the current coercion effort, however, is the fact that Iran has not only resisted US pressure to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons, Iran appears to have stepped up its efforts to develop nuclear weapons. In the summer of 2003, fearing that Iran may be secretly developing nuclear weapons, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany (referred to as the EU-3) offered Iran technological and economic assistance in return for Iran's promise to adopt the Additional Protocol of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and an agreement to halt its uranium enrichment program. Iran rejected the offer and in the fall of 2003, inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) found traces of weapons grade uranium in Iranian nuclear facilities.[120] Iran claimed the uranium was the result of contamination on the equipment, which it purchased from an unnamed international

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[117] Mehrdad Valibeigi, "Law of Unintended Consequences: US Sanctions and Iran's Hardliners," *Middle East Report Information Project Online, Report Number 12804*, 28 January 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.merip.org/mero/mero012804.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[118] Values calculated using 1990, 1995, 2000, 2001, 2002 GDP figures from the Europa Plus on-line database, http://www.europaworld.com. Data downloaded 25 February 2005. Europa Plus cites its data source as the World Bank, *World Development Indicators* database.

[119] Mehrdad Valibeigi, "Law of Unintended Consequences: US Sanctions and Iran's Hardliners," *Middle East Report Information Project Online, Report Number 12804*, 28 January 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.merip.org/mero/mero012804.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[120] *Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Report by the Director General, GOV/203/63, 26 August 2003,* n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Board/2003/gov2003-63.pdf, accessed 10 March 2005.

source.[121] The discovery prompted a strong reaction from the United States and several European countries, which called on Iran to halt its uranium enrichment program.

In the face of rising international pressure, including rebukes by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran agreed to enter into negotiations with the EU-3 and to suspend its uranium enrichment program voluntarily for as long as the negotiations remained productive.[122] Despite the EU-3 negotiations, the United States remained concerned that it was pursuing nuclear weapons and attempted to complement its coercion campaign with bi-lateral talks with Iran.[123]

The EU-3 talks have experienced alternating periods of optimism and tension, yet to date, they have produced no tangible results. In fact, throughout the negotiations, Iranian officials have repeatedly asserted Iran's right and willingness to resume its enrichment program.[124] Near the end of 2004, Hojjatoleslam Rafsanjani declared publicly that Iran intended to resume its enrichment program by mid 2005 and that Iran was ready to become a nuclear-capable state.[125]

While it is impossible to predict the ultimate outcome the EU-3 negotiations and the US coercion campaign, it is clear that, to date, neither has been successful. It is also clear that the Iranian government is poised to complete its efforts to become self-sufficient in nuclear technology.[126] Should this happen, Iran would be positioned to exploit that technology to produce nuclear weapons. This reality has prompted

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[121]Ron Synovitz, "Iran: IAEA Confirms Finding Weapons Grade Uranium," *Radio Free Europe On Line*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/iran/2003/iran-030827-rferl-172732.htm, accessed 26 February 2005.

[122] 28 January 2004 entry in "Nuclear Program Chronology," *Iranian Country Study*, Nuclear Threat Initiative, Updated February 2005, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.nti.org/, accessed 10 March 2005.

[123] 5 October 2003 entry in "Nuclear Program Chronology," *Iranian Country Study*, Nuclear Threat Initiative, Updated February 2005, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.nti.org/, accessed 10 March 2005.

[124] 10 November 2004 entry in "Nuclear Program Chronology," *Iranian Country Study*, Nuclear Threat Initiative, Updated February 2005, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.nti.org/, accessed 10 March 2005.

[125] 3 and 5 December 2004 entries in "Nuclear Program Chronology," *Iranian Country Study*, Nuclear Threat Initiative, Updated February 2005, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.nti.org/, accessed 10 March 2005.

[126] 3 and 5 December 2004 entries in "Nuclear Program Chronology," *Iranian Country Study*, Nuclear Threat Initiative, Updated February 2005, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.nti.org/, accessed 10 March 2005

increasingly aggressive rhetoric between the United States and Iran since early 2005. It also defines a shrinking window of opportunity for US coercion to be successful.

One of the reason for the failure of US coercion may stem from the fact that the current coercion campaign has been based on a unitary actor view of Iran.[127] The MACF presented in chapter 1 provides a means of overcoming the problems associated with coercion based on a unitary actor model of state decision-making. To maximize the opportunity for successful coercion, the US should abandon its current unitary-actor based coercion campaign in favor of one based on the MACF.

Iran and the MACF

The following section combines the MACF concept presented in chapter 1 with the unique character of Iranian decision-making articulated in chapter 2. Specifically, it identifies how the key players and processes of Iranian decision-making fit into the components of the MACF. The section identifies each audience, its relation to the authority, and summarizes its role in Iranian decision-making. It also proposes a mechanism that will influence each audience's decision calculus. Based on that information, the section identifies items of value, associated target sets, and recommended instruments for each audience. For each audience, a figure is included that graphically depicts the linkage between the authority, the coercive mechanism the audience's items of value, associated target sets, and instruments. The section concludes by describing how the actions against each component part are combined to produce a general coercive strategy.

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[127] The blanket nature of the US sanctions is indicative of a unitary actor view. As economist Mehrdad Valibeigi writes: "The impact of 20 years of US sanctions therefore has not been borne by their ostensible targets, that is, the conservative clerics and their allies among the managers of public-sector enterprises or the owners of the various private monopolies in Iran. The sanctions have not made a dent in the financial aid such players send to groups like Hizbollah or Hamas. The Revolutionary Guards and the security apparatus of the regime have not suffered from the embargo either, as the Iranian military relies heavily on vast numbers of readily available conscripts who, in the absence of jobs, have had little choice but to spend years away from their families." See Mehrdad Valibeigi, "Law of Unintended Consequences: US Sanctions and Iran's Hardliners," *The Middle East Research Information Project Online*, 28 January 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.merip.org/mero/mero012804.html, accessed 2 March 2005.

Audience One – The Supreme Leader

Relation with Authority

The Supreme Leader serves as the Authority in Iranian decision-making. By virtue of the Supreme Leaders' constitutional and informal powers, he alone is empowered to declare Iran's intention to resist or comply with coercion. However, competing political movements in Iran maintain enough power and public support to force him to seek factional support for most decisions. This makes the supreme leader only one of several audiences in Iranian decision-making. Because other audiences have sufficient power to create a crisis in government decision-making, the Supreme Leader must act in ways that maintain the support of his traditional power base, the Traditional Right. In short, the Supreme Leader cannot act unilaterally. In this regard, when coercing Iran, it is necessary, but not sufficient, to influence the decision calculus of the Supreme Leader.

Role in Iranian Decision-Making

Both formally and informally, the Supreme Leader serves as the most powerful audience in virtually all state decision-making processes. While the current leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, is in a somewhat precarious position because of his weak religious credentials, no major initiative is undertaken in Iran without the Supreme Leader's support or acquiescence.[128]

Items of Value

Actions by Ayatollah Khamenei since he became Supreme Leader in 1989 suggest two items of value that can be used to influence him as an audience. First, while maintaining a veneer of revolutionary rhetoric, Iranian foreign policy as directed by the Supreme Leader has become increasingly pragmatic.[129] This suggests that Iran's place in the international community is an item of value for the Supreme Leader.

For example, Iran's foreign policy under Khamenei's has become significantly less confrontational with respect to its regional neighbors. Iran has supported regional stability by reducing terrorism in many nations and engaging in direct state-to-state

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[128] Buchta, 8.

[129] Daniel Byman, Shahram Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, *Iran's Security Policy in the Post-Revolutionary Era* (Santa Monica: RAND Publications, 2001), xiv, 2.

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dialog on common issues of concern.[130] Even with its traditional adversaries, Iraq and

Saudi, Iran has made deliberate efforts to reduce tensions by sponsoring high-level

diplomatic visits and concluding bi-lateral statements of "mutual respect and

friendship."[131] Economically, Iran is attempting to attract foreign investment by

liberalizing import policies, reducing tariffs, simplifying investment procedures, and

creating free trade zone.[132] Even in the most contentious area of US-Iranian relations,

Khamenei is reported as having covertly authorized segments of the Iranian government

to initiate dialog with the United States.[133] Although these last initiatives have been

complicated by the increase in tensions between the US and Iran since 2002, Iran's EU-3

negotiations show a willingness to engage with other nations in an attempt to enhance its

international position.

The second item of value is Ayatollah Khamenei's hold on the position of

Supreme Leader. Since he was appointed Supreme Leader, Khamenei's legitimacy has

been challenged for political and religious reasons. His extensive efforts to counter these

challenges suggest Khamenei views his position as Supreme Leader as an item of value.

As the political power of the Islamic Left-Modern Right reform coalition has

grown from 1995 to 2005, Ayatollah Khamenei has repeatedly acceded to demands made

by President Khatami rather than risk a governmental crisis that could threaten his

position.[134] Khamenei has also worked proactively to strengthen his position. For

example, in 2004, fearing the growing power of the reform movement, he supported the

Council of Guardian's ban on over 4,000 candidates for Parliament, most of whom were

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[130] Byman, Chubin, and Ehteshami,, xiv.

[131] Elton L. Daniel, *The History of Iran* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), 248.

[132] US Department of Energy. *Country Analysis Brief: Iran, August 2004*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/iran.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[133] Gregory F. Giles, "The Crucible of Radical Islam: Iran's Leaders and Strategic Culture" in *Know Thy Enemy, Profiles of Adversary Leaders and Their Strategic Cultures*, 2d ed., eds. Barry R. Schneider and Jerrold M. Post (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 2003), 155.

[134] In 1997, Ayatollah Khamenei tacitly supported efforts by the Traditional Right to hinder the Presidential campaign of Khatami. When threatened with the prospect that Khatami might withdraw from the election, thus tarnishing the electoral process, Khamenei reiterated his neutrality in the election. Similarly, in 1998, fearing violent protest, Khamenei acceded to Khatami's demands that a prominent reformer be released from jail. In a third example later that year, President Khatami threatened to resign if Ayatollah Khamenei did not make public the results of an internal investigation that implicated the regime in the murder of a reformist politician. See Buchta, 33, 141, 169.

pro-reform.[135] That move coincided with Khamenei's aggressive tightening of censorship among pro-reform newspaper.[136]

These political actions are paralleled by, and consistent with, Khamenei's actions to overcome his weak religious credentials. Unlike Rouhollah Khomeini, Sayyid Khamenei is not a Grand Ayatollah. In fact, after he was selected by the Assembly of Experts to replace Khomeini as Supreme Leader, Khamenei had to be promoted from Hojjatoleslam to Ayatollah and the Iranian constitution had to be amended to allow a non-Grand Ayatollah to assume the position of Supreme Leader.[137] Khamenei's status as Ayatollah left him subordinate to several Grand Ayatollahs in Iran and thus made him vulnerable to challenges over his qualifications to serve as the Supreme Leader. Since assuming the office of Supreme Leader, Khamenei has tried on several occasions to attain the rank of Grand Ayatollah, but has been unsuccessful in each attempt.[138]

Ayatollah Khamenei's actions since becoming Supreme Leader clearly show his items of value to be Iran's international standing and retaining his position as Supreme Leader. This information makes it possible to determine the mechanisms, targets, and instruments that can influence the Supreme Leader.

Mechanism for Influencing Decision Calculus

The weak position of Ayatollah Khamenei culturally, relative to Grand Ayatollah Khomeini and other leading Shi'a clerics, and politically, relative to the popular support enjoyed by reformers, make the current Supreme Leader susceptible to a decapitation mechanism. Decapitation mechanisms seek to threaten the audience's personal security or their ability to remain in a position of power.

Target Sets and Instruments

As described in chapter 1, an item of value may or may not be a target set. When items of value are tangible things, they may well be a viable target. In other instances,

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[135] "Their Last Chance? – Iran (The State of Iran)," *The Economist* 370, no. 8358 (17 January 2004):

[136] "Iran – Reformist Newspapers Muzzled Before Election," Human Rights Watch Report, 19 February 2004, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://hrw.org/english/docs/2004/02/19/iran7571.htm , accessed 15 March 2005.

[137] The constitution was amended in 1989 in part so Khamenei could fill the position of Supreme Leader. See Daniel, 224.

[138] *Iran: The Struggle for the Revolution's Soul*, 5 August 2002, Middle East Report Number 5, (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2002), 17-8, on-line, Internet, available from http://www.icg.org/home/index.cfm?id=1673&l=1, accessed 15 March 2005.

however, items of value may be intangible. Therefore, physical target sets that will affect the item of value when engaged must be identified. The Supreme Leader's first item of value, Iran's place in the international community, is an example. Iran's place in the international community is a function of two things: its oil production capability and its role as a regional power.[139]

Oil is the dominant component of Iran's economy.[140] Similarly, Iran's oil production is a significant component of the world's oil production capability. Accordingly, oil is a major determinant of Iran's standing in the international community. Iran possesses over ten percent of the world's known oil reserve and is the second largest producer of oil in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), exporting approximately four million barrels of oil per day.[141] This quantity, and the fact that Iran's customers include the major economies of the world, makes Iran a driver in the world oil market, and thus a major player in world economic affairs.[142] As a result, there is a direct link between Iran's oil production and its standing in the international community. This makes Iranian oil production infrastructure particularly vulnerable and an ideal target set for coercion.

The second factor influencing Iran's international standing is its role as a regional power. Historically, Iran's size, educated population, industrialized economy, strong conventional military, and support of revolutionary terrorism made it an influential power in the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, and broader Middle East.[143] After the Islamic Revolution in 1979, however, Iran experienced a steady decline in its military and economic power. The Iran-Iraq war further reduced Iran's power in the region. Despite these reductions, however, Iran remains influential in the region because of its ability to

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[139] US Department of Energy. *Country Analysis Brief: Iran, August 2004*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/iran.html, accessed 25 February 2005. Also see Anthony H. Cordesman, "Iran's Developing Military Capabilities, Main Report, Working Draft, 8 December 2004," Center for Strategic and International Studies, on-line, Internet, available from http://csis.org, accessed 10 March 2005.

[140] US Department of Energy. *Country Analysis Brief: Iran, August 2004*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/iran.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Iran is a major supplier of oil and natural gas to Japan, China, South Korea, Taiwan, and the European Union. See "US Department of Energy. *Country Analysis Brief: Iran, August 2004*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/iran.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[143] Library of Congress, *Country Study: Iran*. n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/irtoc.html, accessed 23 March 2005.

project power through its support of terrorism and residual conventional military power. For example, Iran's support of Hizbollah and Hamas has been a major influence on the relations between Israel, Lebanon, and the Palestinians.[144] Similarly, Iran's conventional force posture along the Straight of Hormuz continues to provide it a potential to affect oil flow out of the Persian Gulf.[145]

Given the link between Iran's ability to project power, its status as a regional power and its standing in the international community, the U.S. should target Iran's conventional military forces and the forces that train, sponsor, and equip terrorists; namely the *Artesh* and IRGC. For example, military force could be used to strike oil infrastructure, assets, and forces of IRGC and *Artesh*. Diplomatic and economic power could also be used to isolate Iranian oil exports.

Khamenei's second item of value is his desire to remain in power as the Supreme Leader. Perhaps the most important target set supporting this is the IRGC (including the *Basij*) forces he uses to repress internal dissent. Since 1989, Khamenei has repeatedly used the IRGC to repress opposition.[146] For example, in 1992, motivated by Khamenei's desire, the Parliament passed a law that authorized the *Basij* to enforce laws throughout the country.[147] This authority was used to repress un-Islamic behavior that was perceived as a potential threat to Khamenei's position.[148] Similarly, IRGC forces have been used by Khamenei to put down demonstrations and protests brutally within Iran.[149] As the key enablers of the Supreme Leader's ability to retain power, the IRGC is comprised of tangible entities that can be struck as a target set.

According to the MACF, affecting the IRGC, the *Artesh*, and Iranian oil production infrastructure will affect items that are of value to the Supreme Leader as an audience. Figure 4 provides a pictorial representation of the Supreme Leader as an audience in the MACF.

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[144] Byman, Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, 81-86.

[145] Anthony H. Cordesman, "Iran's Developing Military Capabilities, Main Report, Working Draft, 8 December 2004," Center for Strategic and International Studies, on-line, Internet, available from http://csis.org, accessed 10 March 2005, 18.

[146] Buchta, 65-69.

[147] Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2002), 217.
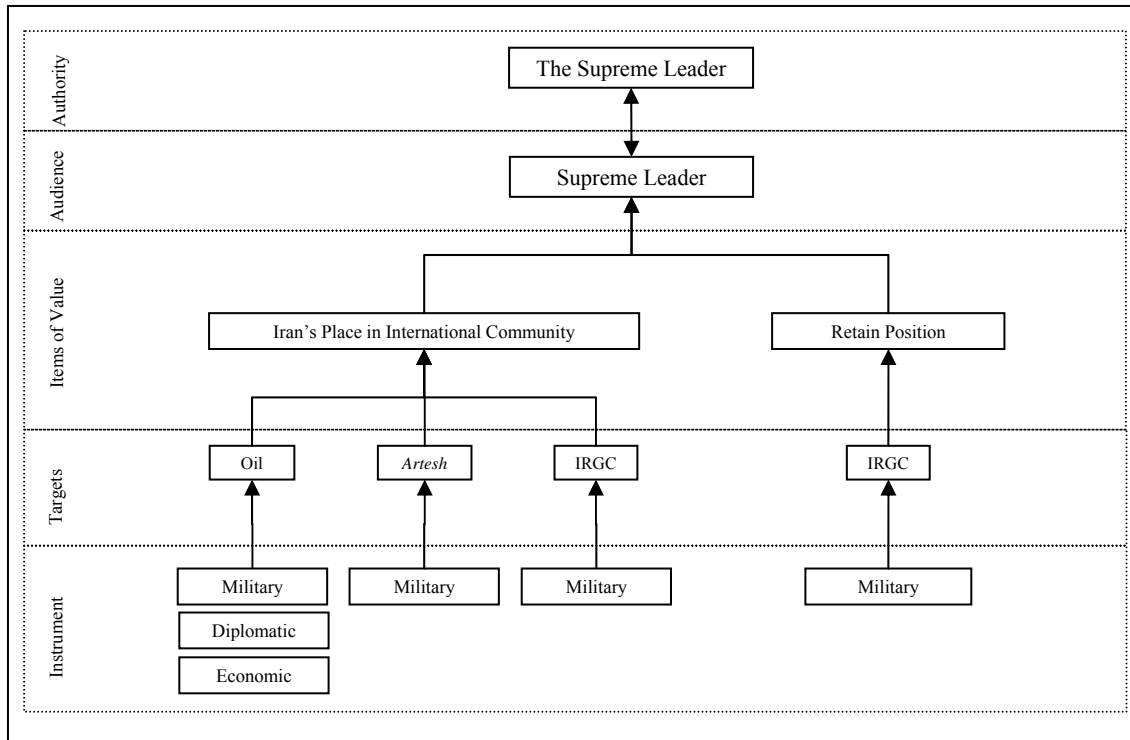
[148] Ibid., 219.

[149] Buchta, 70.

Figure 4 – MACF Linkages for Supreme Leader as Audience

However, as described in chapter 2, the Supreme Leader cannot act unilaterally. Therefore, while it is necessary to influence the Supreme Leader, it is also necessary to influence the decision calculus of other audiences.

Audience Two – President Khatami

Relation with Authority

President Khatami is the second audience in Iranian decision-making. Formally, his power is significant, but it is clearly subordinate to the Supreme Leader's. Informally, however, President Khatami's popular support gives him a component of power that is beyond the Supreme Leader. Khatami has leveraged this power on many occasions to extract concessions from Khamenei.[150] However, these instances have generally not involved issues vital to national security or threatened the position of the Supreme Leader, and it is unclear whether Khatami could leverage his popularity in such areas. What is clear, however, is that neither President Khatami nor the Supreme Leader

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[150] Giles, 152-4.

are able to act unilaterally and this has forced the two to establish a necessary, if uneasy, cooperative relationship.

Role in Iranian Decision-Making

Constitutionally, the President's power is limited to domestic economic policy. President Khatami's actual influence extends beyond economics because Khatami personally represents the popular reform movement in Iran. Accordingly, in issues outside of domestic economics, Khatami's role in decision-making is largely informal and based on his ability to manipulate the Supreme Leader on any given issue.

Even though President Khatami is constitutionally prevented from serving another term as President when his current term expires in 2005, he will undoubtedly remain an important force in the reform movement. As such, it is important for the US to influence his thinking with respect to Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons since he openly supports Iran's pursuit of nuclear technology.[151]

Items of Value

President Khatami has a one main item of value: political and economic reform. During his two terms in office, Khatami has repeatedly placed these above all of his other concerns. He was elected in 1997 with high expectations of reform based on liberalization policies enacted while Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance under President Rafsanjani.[152] Politically, Khatami has sought to liberalize and modernize Iran by promoting the rule of constitutional law over Islamic law, easing restrictions on the media, advocating for minority rights, pursuing the legalization of political parties, organizing Iran's first elections for local governing councils, and even establishing cultural exchanges with the United States.[153]

Khatami recognizes that political reform is necessarily tied to economic reform. Therefore, his early reform efforts were paralleled by an economic plan that emphasized continuing the structural reforms begun by Rafsanjani. Specifically, the Third Five Year Plan for economic policies between 2000 and 2005 aimed to reduce government

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[151] Nasser Karimi, "Iran Vows Not to Abandon Nuclear Progress," *ABC News On-Line*, 10 February 2005, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://abcnews.go.com/international/print?id=487081, accessed 10 February 2005.
[152] Daniel, 237.
[153] Ibid., 240.

bureaucracy and subsidies, privatize the economy, stimulate investment, and break monopolies.[154] More recently, Khatami has led an effort to increased foreign investment in Iran and to root out corruption in Iran's *bonyads* and oil industry.[155]

Like his political reforms, these were challenged by conservatives; in particular government technocrats of the Modern Right and the *bonyads* controlled by the Traditional Right. As Khatami continued to propose reforms, conservative opposition increased as IRGC and *Basij* forces attacked media offices and demonstrators. In the first eighteen months of Khatami's reforms, nine of the most vocal reformist journalists, intellectuals, and scholars were murdered, died of mysterious causes, or simply disappeared.[156] Despite these acts, Khatami continued to press his reform agenda. Further, Khatami repeatedly challenged Khamenei publicly, even threatening to resign if Khamenei would not support him. The fact that Khatami risked his political and physical security by pursuing his reform platform in the face of this opposition suggests that he values political and economic reform.

Mechanism for Influencing Decision Calculus

President Khatami's power stems almost exclusively from the extensive support he enjoys from pro-reform segments of the Iranian population. Without the support of this loyal power base, President Khatami would wield little power. This makes him susceptible to a power base erosion mechanism, which seeks to diminish the support an audience receives from its power base. However, the fact that his reform effort depends on his ability to remain in formal positions of power also make Khatami vulnerable to a denial mechanism, which seeks to eliminate an audience's ability to achieve its objectives.

Successfully coercing President Khatami, then, involves combining power base erosion and denial mechanisms to emphasize three related concepts. First, that lack of political and economic reform in Iran jeopardizes the popular support that forms the base of his power. Second, the reform movement's ability to create political and economic

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[154] Bijan Khajehpour, "Domestic Political Reforms and Private Sector Activity in Iran," *Social Research* 67, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 577, 589.

[155] US Department of Energy. *Country Analysis Brief: Iran, August 2004*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/iran.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[156] Daniel, 242.

reform will be enhanced by US and international assistance and support.[157] And, third, US and international assistance is contingent upon Iran abandoning its pursuit of nuclear technology.

Target Sets and Instruments

Khatami's item of value is also his target set. That is, affecting his ability to implement reform in Iran can serve as leverage in his decision calculus regarding Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons. Khatami's political power stems from his popular support. That support, however, is contingent on his ability to meet the population's expectations for political and economic reform.

As shown by his recent efforts to increase foreign investment in Iran, President Khatami recognizes that economic reform requires international involvement.[158] Further, he recognizes that political reform is fundamentally tied to economic reform and growth.[159] Finally, Khatami understands that success in reform facilitates further reform.[160] The US must leverage these linkages to tie Iran's abandonment of its pursuit of nuclear weapons to US economic investment and aid and their potential to facilitate economic and political reform.[161]

The ability of the United States to do so is complicated by recent and historical tensions with Iran. Since the 2002 State of the Union Address where President Bush labeled Iran part of the axis of evil, US-Iranian relations have seen a marked increase in tensions. This comes on top of the long-held animosity Iranians have toward the US. Both threaten to undermine the political power and legitimacy of any Iranian politician who is seen as cooperating with the United States.[162]

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[157] Bijan Khajehpour, "Domestic Political Reforms and Private Sector Activity in Iran," *Social Research* 67, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 592.

[158] US Department of Energy. *Country Analysis Brief: Iran, August 2004*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/iran.html, accessed 25 February 2005.

[159] Khajehpour, 577.

[160] President Khatami experienced this first hand. His election as President in 1997 is widely seen as resulting from the momentum built by the reformist victories in the Parliamentary elections of 1996.

[161] This is complicated by two realities. First, the increase in tensions between the US and Iran since the 2002 State of the Union Address where President Bush labeled Iran part of the axis of evil. Second, the long-held animosity Iranians have toward the US. Both threaten to undermine the political power and legitimacy of any Iranian politician who is seen as cooperating with the United States.

[162] Buchta, 70.

Yet, prior to the most recent increase in tensions, President Khatami enjoyed some success in legitimizing the idea of reconciling relations with the United States. For example, in 1997, he coordinated cultural exchanges between the two countries and in 1998, he conducted an extensive interview with the Cable News Network (CNN) in which he proclaimed respect for the American people and history and a desire to open a dialog between the Iranian and US people.[163] Those actions facilitated moves by the Islamic Left and Modern Right factions to supported limited and measured reconciliation with the United States.[164] While certainly small, and perhaps temporary advances, these moves suggest Khatami is not opposed in principle to the idea of improved US-Iranian ties.

These realities indicate that the diplomatic and economic instruments of power are best suited to affect President Khatami's target set and item of value. Diplomatically, the United States may need to take a multi-step approach. First, it may need to de-escalate current tensions. Then the United States could engage diplomatically with President Khatami and his reform movement. As part of that effort, the United States could employ the economic instrument of power to support Iran's economic development, growth, and reform. For example, it could lift existing sanctions, provide aid, and support investment in Iran in return for concessions on Iran's pursuit of nuclear technology. Figure 5 provides a pictorial representation for President Khatami as an audience in the MACF.

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[163] In the interview, President Khatami also said that political conditions would have to change before the two governments could engage into bilateral talks to resolved differences. Nonetheless, the interview was a significant step in articulating Iranian concerns and offering an opportunity for improvements in relations. See President Mohammad Khatami, interview by Christianne Amanpour, 7 January 1998, *Cable News Network*, "Transcript of interview with Iranian President Mohammad Khatami," n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.cnn.com/world/9801/07/iran/interview.html, accessed 20 February 2005.
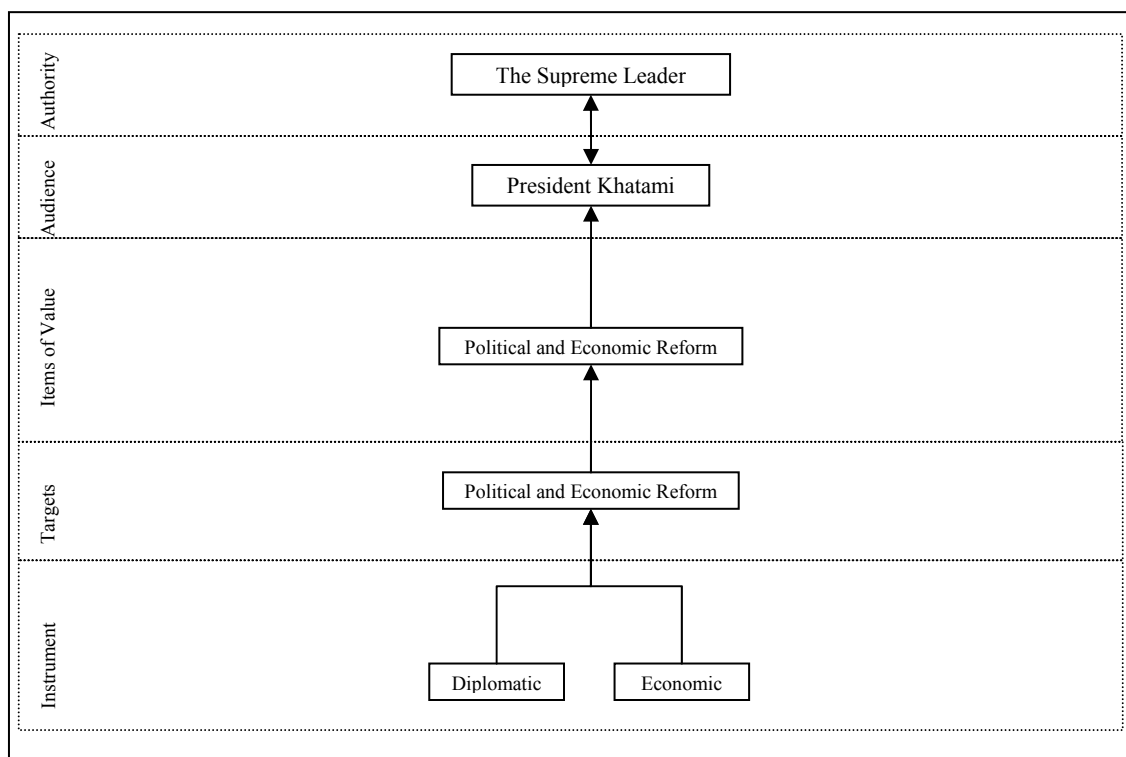
[164] Buchta, 70, 135.

Figure 5 – MACF Linkages for President Khatami as Audience

Audience Three – Ali-Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani

Relation with Authority

Hojjatoleslam Hashemi Rafsanjani has an important and unique relationship with the Supreme Leader. During his two terms as president from 1989-1996, Khamenei's relatively weak position made him heavily reliant on Rafsanjani to exert his authority. This gave Rafsanjani significant power in Iranian affairs. Rafsanjani used that power to move post-revolutionary Iran towards a more modern and moderate nation. In particular, Rafsanjani sought to rebuild Iranian economy from the damage sustained during the revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. He encouraged investment, privatization, and diversification. Culturally, he favored human rights and freedom of the press as important means to modernizing Iran. Khamenei was too weak to challenge Rafsanjani and therefore chose to support nearly all of his initiatives. In doing so, he gained legitimacy and time to expand his power base. In return, Rafsanjani's own power grew.

As a result, the two enjoyed a symbiotic relationship.[165] Khamenei showed his continued support for Rafsanjani by appointing him to head the Expediency Council after Rafsanjani completed his constitutionally limited second term as President. In this capacity, Rafsanjani remains in a position to influence Iranian decision-making.[166]

Role in Iranian Decision-Making

As head of the Expediency Council, Rafsanjani's formal duties are to resolve disputes between the Parliament and Council of Guardians, to determine the general policies of the republic, and serve as personal advisor to the Supreme Leader.[167] As a result, he is involved in most key issues handled by the Iranian government and is able wield significant influence on Iranian decision-making through is his special relationship with the Supreme Leader.[168]

Rafsanjani also retains significant informal influence in Iranian decision-making. Despite his move toward the Traditional Right in the later 19990s, Rafsanjani remains an important figure in the Modern Right faction that was founded around his reform movement in the mid-1990s.[169] However, Rafsanjani poor showing in the 2000 Parliamentary elections suggest that the public may now see him more as a conservative than a reformer.[170] Nonetheless, if the Council of Guardians disqualifies the more reformist candidates from the 2005 presidential election, Rafsanjani could exploit his reformist past and close ties to Khamenei to be a strong candidate. In any case, Rafsanjani remains an exceptionally powerful figure in Iranian decision-making.[171]

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[165] Moslem, 142-9.
[166] Daniel, 236.
[167] Said Amir Arjomand, "Civil Society and the Rule of Law in the Constitutional Politics of Iran Under Khatami," *Social Research* 67, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 285.
[168] Moslem, 151; Daniel, 236.
[169] Daniel, 256.
[170] Rafsanjani ran for Parliament as a candidate from Tehran in the 2000 elections. Reformist candidates scored an overwhelming victory in the election, especially in the urban areas such as Tehran. Rafsanjani was forced into a run off for the last seat from his district and narrowly won election. Rafsanjani later relinquished the seat. Rafsanjani's struggles in the election have led to speculation that he is seen more as a conservative politician than a reformer. This could have implications should Rafsanjani decide, and be approved, to run for President in 2005. See Daniel, 256. Also see "The Structure of Power in Iran, An Overview of the Iranian Government and Political System," *PBS Front Line, Inside Iran*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/tehran/inside/govt.html, accessed 10 February 2005.
[171] Daniel, 256.

Items of Value

Rafsanjani's actions while in Iranian government suggest two distinct items of value: a modern economy and an effective self-defense capability for Iran. After his election in 1989, President Rafsanjani's First Five Year Economic Plan contained an extensive set of reforms meant to modernize Iran's economy.[172] Specifically, Rafsanjani's reforms were designed to privatize public businesses, reduce state subsidies in the remaining public businesses, promote free trade, and embrace foreign investment – in short, to integrate Iran into the world economy.[173]

These reforms threatened the economic and political power of bazzaris and leaders of the *bonyads*, who derived advantages from the existing state-dominated economy. In doing so, the reforms also threatened the conservative Traditional Right who received their support from the *bonyads* and bazzaris. The fact that Rafsanjani continued to press his reforms through the remainder of his first term and throughout his second term indicate Rafsanjani viewed reforming the Iranian economy as an item of value.[174]

Rafsanjani's second item of value is building an effective self-defense capability for Iran. As Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces at the end of the Iran-Iraq war, Rafsanjani was charged with re-building Iran's military. Because of international sanctions in place since the 1979 revolution, Iran had very few resources with which to build a conventional military force. As a result, Rafsanjani continued the trend begun during the war of developing asymmetric defense capabilities, including long-range surface-to-surface missiles and weapons of mass destruction.[175] Iran's primary efforts in its weapons of mass destruction development have been to develop an indigenous Iranian nuclear capability. Throughout his career, Rafsanjani has been a driving force in that effort; so much, that he has been called "the principle architect of Tehran's weapons of mass destruction program."[176]

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[172] Behzad Yaghmaian, *Social Change in Iran, An Eyewitness Account of Dissent, Defiance, and New Movements for Rights* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 188.
[173] Yaghmaian, 185.
[174] Moslem, 150 and 188-9.
[175] Byman, Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, 32.
[176] Mohammad Mohaddessin, *Enemies of the Ayatollahs, The Iranian Opposition's War on Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: Zed Books, 2004), 26.

After the fall of the Shah, Rafsanjani revived Iran's nuclear program, and obtained international assistance to build nuclear facilities. Rafsanjani's views on nuclear technology and weapons were clearly demonstrated in a speech he delivered to the IRGC while acting Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces in 1988: "We should fully equip ourselves both in the offensive and defensive use of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. From now on, you should make use of the opportunity and perform this task."[177] Rafsanjani's remarks, coming shortly after Iran suffered chemical weapons attacks by Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war are somewhat understandable. However, his remarks fifteen years later on the anniversary of that war suggest his desire for weapons of mass destruction is more than a short-term reaction to the war. In September 2003, referring to the United States, he said:

> Those who threaten Iran ought to know that the situation is very different from the past. Our country is now more ready to defend itself than it was before . . . Today we manufacture many weapons inside the country and have built missiles which have worried our enemies."[178]

These comments, and the IAEA's declaration the same year that Iran was enriching uranium well beyond the level needed for peaceful nuclear energy conflict with Iran's insistence that it is not pursuing nuclear weapons.[179]

Mechanism for Influencing Decision Calculus

Throughout his career, *realpolitik* has been the driving force behind Rafsanjani's policies.[180] That is, he has consistently supported pragmatic policies that he deemed likely to produce tangible benefits for Iran – even when policies presented considerable risk for him personally. For example, he was the central figure in Iran's secret negotiations with the United States to obtain weapons for the war against Iraq in return for Iran's assistance in securing the release of US hostages in Lebanon.[181] Although supported by Khomeini, the move clearly put Rafsanjani at considerable political risk.

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[177] Ibid.

[178] Ibid.

[179] *Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Report by the Director General, GOV/203/63, 26 August 2003, Derestricted 12 September 2003.* n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Board/2003/gov2003-63.pdf, accessed 10 March 2005.

[180] Daniel, 229.

[181] Moslem, 67.

Similarly, when the Iran-Iraq war turned in Iraq's favor, Rafsanjani, as the newly appointed commander of the armed forces, took the very unpopular position of openly calling for an end to the war as a way to avoid total defeat. Rafsanjani's position was squarely at odds with Ayatollah Khomeini and the powerful traditional right.[182] He has consistently defied popular sentiment by openly calling for foreign investment and involvement in Iran's economy. Moreover, and perhaps most telling, he has repeatedly advocated a thaw in US relations.[183]

These actions show Rafsanjani to be pragmatic when it comes to the well being of the Iranian state. This, in turn, suggests Rafsanjani may be susceptible to a combination of incentive and denial mechanisms. Incentives would provide badly needed resources to pursue the policies and activities that benefit Iran. The denial mechanism would balance incentives by threatening to prevent Rafsanjani from achieving his objectives. In this way, incentives and denial would work together in a carrot and stick approach to exploiting Rafsanjani's pragmatism.

Target Sets and Instruments

The target set for Rafsanjani's first item of value is the Iranian economy itself. Despite his move toward the Traditional Right beginning in the mid-1990s, Rafsanjani, like President Khatami, has based his political career on modernizing Iran. Also like Khatami, Rafsanjani believes that modernization relies to some degree on Iranian interaction with the United States and the international community.[184] Even as tensions with the United States increased after 2002, Rafsanjani publicly proclaimed the benefit Iran could receive from improving relations with the United States and suggested that the issue of renewed US relations be decided by a popular referendum.[185] Thus, the United States could exploit Rafsanjani's pragmatism by offering substantial financial assistance to assist Iran's effort to modernize its economy.

Hojjatoleslam Rafsanjani's second item of value, Iran's defense capability has a more tangible target set: Iran's nuclear infrastructure. By targeting the research,

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[182] Buchta, 70.
[183] Daniel, 64.
[184] Mahmood Sariolghalam, "Understanding Iran: Getting Past Stereotypes and Mythology," *The Washington Quarterly* 26, no. 4 (Autumn 2003): 72.
[185] Ray Takeyh, "Iranian Options," *The National Interest* 73 (Fall 2003): 50.

production, and storage facilities, the United States can undermine Iran's pursuit of an asymmetric defense capability.[186]

As mentioned above, US action against these targets, and thus Rafsanjani's items of value, are likely to be mutually supportive. That is, through incentives, the United States is willing to provide economic aid or assistance in return for Iran abandoning its nuclear program. If Iran refuses, however, the United States could use military strikes to degrade the program. Given the probability of losing the nuclear program, Rafsanjani's pragmatism could lead him to favor abandoning the program voluntarily in return for US incentives. Figure 6 provides a pictorial representation of the Hojjatoleslam Rafsanjani as an audience in the MACF.
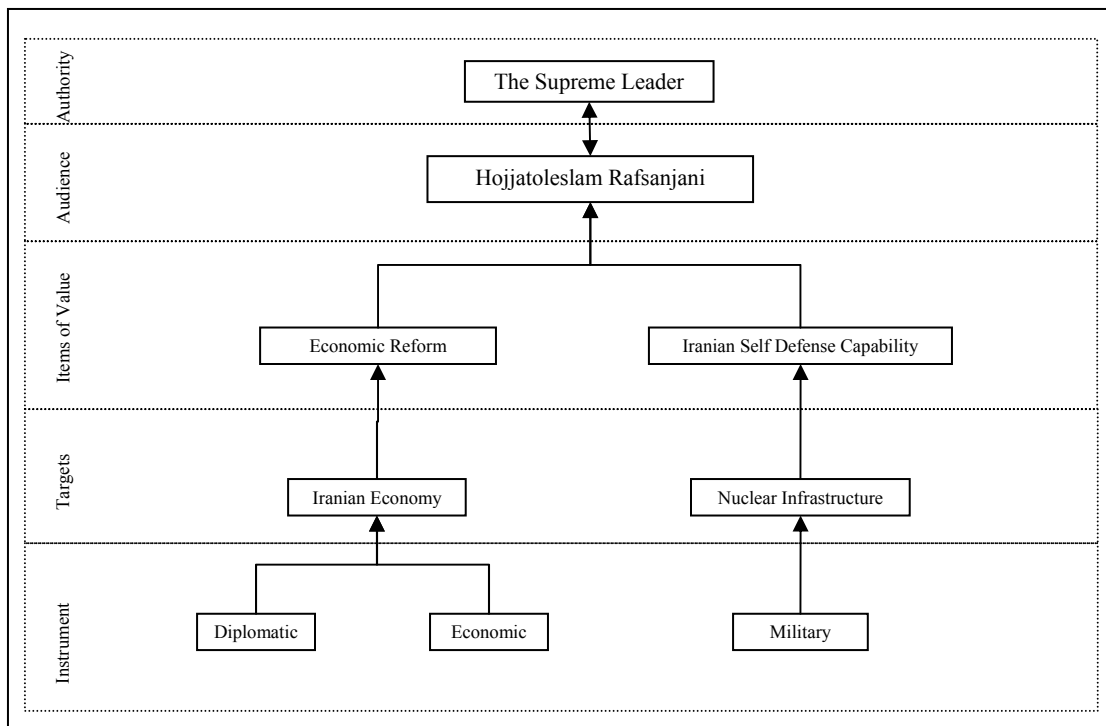

Figure 6 – MACF Linkages for Ali Akbar Rafsanjani as Audience

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[186] The *Artesh* and IRGC also contribute to Iran's self-defense capability. However, Rafsanjani's efforts to develop an asymmetric defense capability suggest he values Iran's nuclear infrastructure more than the conventional forces of the *Artesh* and IRGC.

Audience Four – Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)

Relation with Authority

  The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps was established by the ruling conservative clerics to establish order after the 1979 revolution, check counter-revolutionary sentiment in the *Artesh*, and counter the growing leftist movement in Iran.[187] The IRGC quickly became the Supreme Leader's instrument for protecting the Islamic Revolution inside Iran and exporting it outside Iran.[188] As popular support for the Traditional Right has decreased since the revolution, the Supreme Leader has repeatedly used the IRGC to silence the opposition.[189] Thus, the IRGC is essential to the security of the Supreme Leader and to the protection of the values that he and the Traditional Right hold dear.[190]

Role in Iranian Decision-Making

  The Iranian constitution established the IRGC as a military force distinct from the *Artesh* and charged it with "guarding the [Islamic] Revolution and its achievements."[191] This broad charter, and the strong support of the Supreme Leader, has made the IRGC one of the most autonomous power centers in Iran.[192] In fact, the IRGC wields so much influence, that President Khatami must consider its position when contemplating foreign and domestic policy decisions.[193]

  The IRGC's power stems from the fact that it considers itself less a professional army than a politically and ideologically motivated enforcement mechanism obliged to uphold the Islamic Revolution.[194] The IRGC demonstrated this in 1997 when Rahim Safavi, the head of the IRGC, openly threatened President Khatami because his reforms were perceived as threatening the Revolution. In justifying the threats, Safavi declared:

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[187] Byman, Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, 33.

[188] Anthony H. Cordesman, "Iran's Developing Military Capabilities, Main Report, Working Draft, 8 December 2004," Center for Strategic and International Studies, on-line, Internet, available from http://csis.org, accessed 10 March 2005, 16.

[189] Buchta, 68-70.

[190] This was clearly demonstrated when the Supreme Leader intervened to prevent President Khatami from integrating the IRGC into the *Artesh* as a means of controlling its power. See Buchta, 70.

[191] Article150 of the *Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from www.ir.online.com/iran-info/government/constitituion, accessed on 11February 2005.

[192] Buchta, 68-70.

[193] Ibid., 70-1.

[194] Ibid., 68.

We [the IRGC] do not interfere in politics but if we see that the foundations of our system of government and our revolution are threatened . . . we get involved. When I see that a [political] current has hatched a cultural plot, I consider it my right to defend the revolution against this current. My commander is the exalted [supreme] leader and he has not banned me [from doing so].[195]

Just two years later, the IRGC blamed Khatami's reforms for student riots in Tehran. Twenty-four key leaders of the IRGC subsequently sent a letter to Khatami warning the President of their readiness to intervene for the benefit of the regime if he did not put down the protests.[196] Although the Supreme Leader forced the IRGC to retract their threats, the incident illustrates the willingness of the IRGC to become involved in Iranian politics.

The IRGC's ability to subvert Presidential initiatives was strengthened in 1992 when the *Basij* was legally empowered to enforce Iranian political and cultural laws.[197] This new authority gave the IRGC, through the *Basij*, a virtual free hand to repress political opposition.[198]

Despite its influence in Iranian decision-making, the IRGC does not act with complete unity. For example, in 1994, the IRGC refused to put down student unrest in Qazvin. Although *Basij* forces ultimately suppressed the protests, the incident indicated a potential rift in the IRGC's political outlook. Similarly, in the 1997 Presidential elections, IRGC members voted for Khatami at an even higher rate than the general population.[199]

The IRGC's political leanings are important because of the role it plays in Iran's nuclear weapons program. Because of its special relationship with the Supreme Leader, the IRGC is the lead military agency in Iran's surface-to-surface missile and weapons of mass destruction acquisition efforts. Specifically, the IRGC operates all of Iran's Scud theater ballistic missiles and provides the military leadership for production of weapons

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[195] Moslem, 38.
[196] Byman, Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, 46-7, 51.
[197] Moslem, 217.
[198] Daniel, 241.
[199] Michael Eisenstadt, "The Armed Forced of the Islamic Republic of Iran: An Assessment" *Middle East Review of International Affairs Journal* 5, no. 1 (March 2001), n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2001/issue1/jv5n1a2.html, accessed 10 March 2005.

of mass destruction.[200] This gives the IRGC an important role in Iranian decision-making, especially with respect to nuclear weapons.

Items of Value

The IRGC's actions since its founding in 1979 suggest that its most important item of value is its ability to protect the Islamic Revolution and its achievements. Protecting the achievements of revolution is synonymous with protecting the embodiment of the Islamic Republic – the Supreme Leader and his regime, while protecting the revolution is synonymous with its ability to support international Shi'a oppositions groups in their efforts to obtain power.

The IRGC clearly demonstrated this item of value in the early 1990s when it plotted to assassinate President Rafsanjani. The IRGC viewed Rafsanjani as a threat to both the revolution and its accomplishments. His success in persuading Ayatollah Khamenei to terminate the Iran-Iraq war was seen as a substantial setback to Iran's goal of exporting the Islamic Revolution.[201] Further, the IRGC perceived Rafsanjani's political and economic reforms as a threat to the fundamental tenants of the Islamic Republic and the current regime.[202]

Although the IRGC did not follow through on its plot to assassinate Rafsanjani, they did attempt to undermine his reform policies. Domestically, the IRGC supported his political opponents while oppressing their supporters.[203] These efforts continued under Presidents Khatami, whose reforms the IRGC also viewed as a threat to both the revolution and the regime. Perhaps the most blatant example of the IRGC's efforts to undermine the reforms of Presidents Rafsanjani and Khatami is its continued training and logistical support for Shi'a forces in Lebanon and the Sudan as well as for opposition groups in Iraq, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.[204] This support directly conflicted with both Presidents' efforts to improve Iran's international standing by restricting international adventurism. By continuing their support for opposition groups, the IRGC sought to discredit and weaken the Presidents and their reform movements.

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[200] Cordesman, 16.
[201] Byman, Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, 8.
[202] Buchta,, 70.
[203] Byman, Chubin, Ehteshami, and Green, 33; Buchta, 70.
[204] Buchta, 70.

The scope and severity of the IRGC's actions since its founding show its item of value to be an extension of its constitutional charter, that is, protecting the Islamic Revolution and its achievements.

Mechanism for Influencing Decision Calculus

Given their desire to protect the Revolution and its achievements, the United States can affect the IRGC's cost-benefit calculus through a denial mechanism. As defined in chapter 1, denial mechanisms seek to prevent an audience from achieving its objectives. In this case, a denial mechanism prevents the IRGC from protecting the Islamic Republic and regime as well as from supporting foreign Shi'a groups.

To date, the IRGC has relied on a significant conventional military capability to achieve its objectives. However, it is also pursuing nuclear weapons as an important future part of its capabilities.[205] A successful denial mechanism will convince the IRGC that these assets will not survive if the United States is forced to take action. If the IRGC accepts this, it will recognize that it has two options: abandon its nuclear program so that it may maintain its conventional capabilities or risk losing all of its capabilities should the United States make good on its coercive threats.[206]

Target Sets and Instruments

Therefore, to unleash a denial mechanism, the United States should threaten to eliminate the IRGC's conventional and nuclear capabilities. Specifically, the United States should attack the IRGC's army, naval, air, and special operations forces, facilities, and equipment as well as Iran's nuclear infrastructure with military force. Although exact information on IRGC forces is difficult to find and estimates vary significantly, the characterization provided by the Center for Strategic and International Studies suggests the IRGC maintains approximately 100,000 ground personnel, 20,000 naval personnel, 470 tanks, 620 armored personnel carriers, 360 artillery weapons, 40 multiple rocket launchers, 150 air defense guns, forty light patrol boats, 10 guided missile patrol boats, a battery of anti-ship missiles, three intermediate range ballistic missile units, and control

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[205] Cordesman, 16.
[206] This assumes the IRGC found the US threat credible.

of any chemical and biological weapons owned by Iran.[207] Unless this estimate
underestimates IRGC strength by several times, the numbers suggest the United States
has sufficient military capability to eliminate the IRGC's ability to protect the regime.
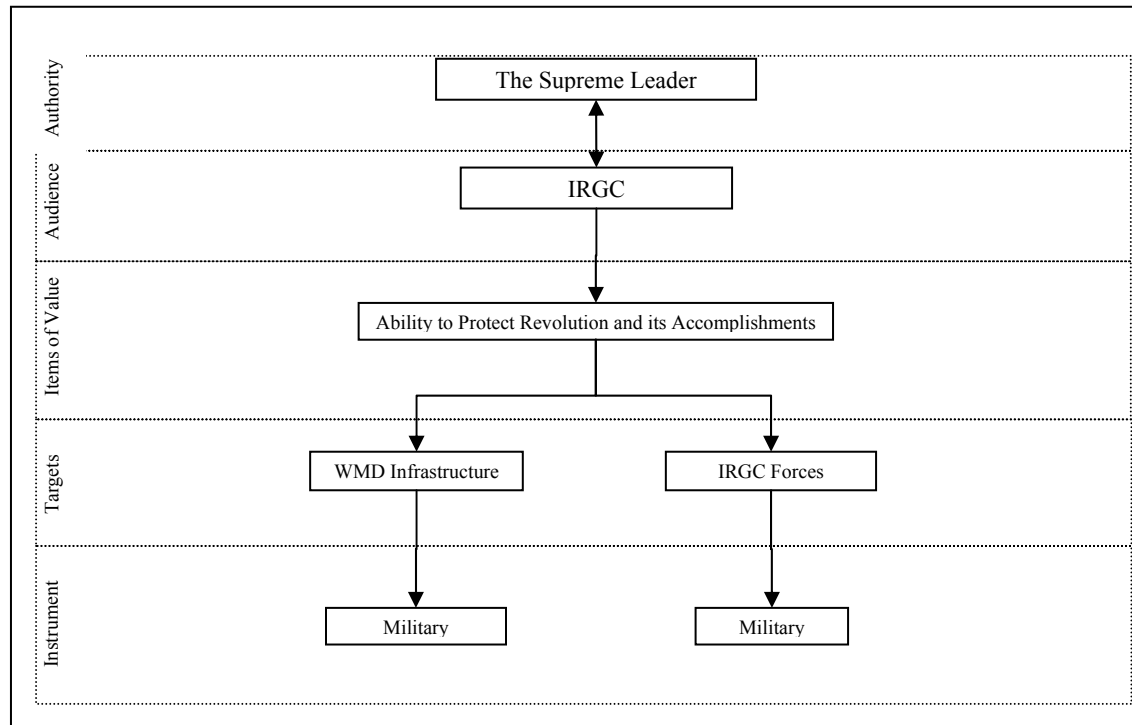Figure 7 provides a pictorial representation of the IRGC as an audience in the MACF.

Figure 7 – MACF Linkages for IRGC as Audience

Each of the previous sections details how the MACF can be used to identify ways
to coerce the key entities in Iranian decision-making with respect to nuclear weapons.
The sum total of these coercive efforts represent a coercion strategy the United States
could employ against Iran to persuade it to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Coercive Strategy

As described in chapter 1, coercive strategies can be categorized by whether they
affect the costs or benefits a state is likely to realize if it resists or complies with a

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[207] The study openly acknowledges the difficulty in providing definitive order of battle information on the IRGC. It also acknowledges that the numbers provided in the study are several years old. Still the numbers are reasonable estimations of IRGC strength that, unless off by an order of magnitude, indicate that the IRGC can be successfully targeted by the United States military. See Anthony H. Cordesman, "Iran's Developing Military Capabilities, Main Report, Working Draft, 8 December 2004," Center for Strategic and International Studies, on-line, Internet, available from http://csis.org, accessed 10 March 2005.

coercer's demands. As presented in this chapter, the US coercive strategy is the sum of the actions taken against each of the four audiences.

Combining these strategies into a single coherent strategy will not likely be easy, however. In particular, five issues may complicate US efforts to coerce Iran as described by the MACF. First, several of the strategies can work at cross-purposes. That is, employing punishment and denial strategies may spur nationalism and support for the regime, which may make strategies such as shielding and inducement seem less appealing. To minimize the potential conflict between strategies, the United States should take great care to sequence the strategies appropriately. Historically, the likelihood of success in coercion is increased when strategies of force such as punishment and risk *precede* strategies of inducement or shielding.[208]

Second, the current jump in oil prices and the long-term trend toward increasing worldwide demand for oil may reduce both short-term and long-term pressures on the Iranian economy. This, in turn, may reduce the appeal of US economic inducement and shielding strategies.[209] At the same time, however, these trends may make Iran more vulnerable to denial and punishment strategies that target Iran's increasingly important oil infrastructure.

Third, US coercive strategies could be undermined by third party nations that may choose to engage with Iran, both politically and economically, despite US attempts to isolate it. This is arguably one of the factors contributing to the failure of current US coercion against Iran.[210] Overcoming this complication requires the United States to convince other nations to support US coercive actions against Iran. While difficult, such action can also increase the effectiveness of coercion.[211]

Fourth, Iran may perceive differences in policies the United States applies to it and those the United States applies to North Korea. One lesson Iran may learn is that

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[208] Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin, eds., *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2003), 388.

[209] According to the US Department of Energy, current oil prices are over 200% higher than 1997 levels and world oil demand will increase by over 180% between 1990 and 2025. See US Department of Energy, "International Petroleum (Oil) Consumption (Demand) Forecast," on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/ieo/pdf/appa1_a8.pdf, accessed 12 April 2005, 165; US Department of Energy, "World Market Crude Oil Price Data," n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/international/crude2.html, accessed 12 April 2005.

[210] Buchta, 134.

[211] Art and Cronin, 367-8.

North Korea, having developed nuclear weapons, is now less susceptible to US coercion. In effect, that North Korea now has a counter-coercion capability. Should Iran choose to interpret US-North Korean interaction this way, Iran may be motivated to press even harder to develop nuclear weapons.[212] To lessen the chances Iran will perceive that North Korea has a counter coercion-capability, the United States could continue to pressure North Korea to abandon its nuclear program. The difficulties being faced by North Korea, economically and politically, could be used to highlight the ineffectiveness of its counter-coercion capability. Similarly, the United States could continue to reward Libya for its decision to abandon its nuclear program. The stark difference between North Korea's and Libya's status in the world community could serve to diminish Iran's belief that nuclear weapons could be an effective counter-coercion capability.

Finally, the United States must address the paradox of its relations with Iran. The United States supports liberal reformers in Iran. However, because of Iranian dislike for the United States, the reformers have little political space to engage. In fact, the more they appear to have the support of the United States, the more their political power is domestically compromised. This prevents the United States from engaging with Iran. Yet such engagement is crucial to employing shielding and inducements strategies. Overcoming the US-Iranian paradox will require concentrated effort on the part of the United States.

The five challenges to integrating US coercion strategies are not insurmountable. However, the US may need to invest significant time and effort to understand how the challenges and potential remedies can work together to impact the overall US coercive strategy against Iran.

For the Supreme Leader, the coercive strategy will raise the cost of resistance by striking Iran's oil infrastructure, the *Artesh*, and the IRGC. This represents a punishment strategy. For President Khatami, the United States is seeking to increase the benefits and lower the costs of complying with US demands by focusing on economic aid. These are inducement and shielding strategies, respectively. With regard to Hojjatoleslam Rafsanjani, the potential of US aid represents an inducement strategy while the threat of

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[212] Art and Cronin argue that when a country believes it has an effective counter-coercion capability, coercion generally fails. See Art and Cronin, p 369.

attacks against Iran's nuclear structure demonstrates a denial strategy. Finally, US coercive action against the IRGC represents a punishment strategy. To the extent the challenge involved in integrating them can be overcome, the MACF articulates a coercion strategy that affects all four possibilities of the cost-benefit calculus of Iran's key decision-makers.

Figures 8 and 9 show current US coercion efforts, which are based on the unitary actor model of decision-making, and a coercion strategy developed using the MACF, respectively. Comparing the two highlights the differences between coercion based on the MACF and coercion based on a unitary actor model of state decision-making.
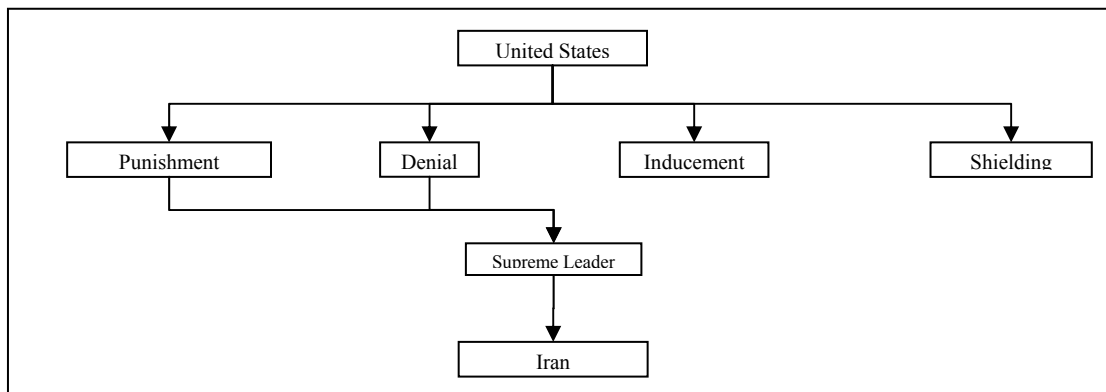

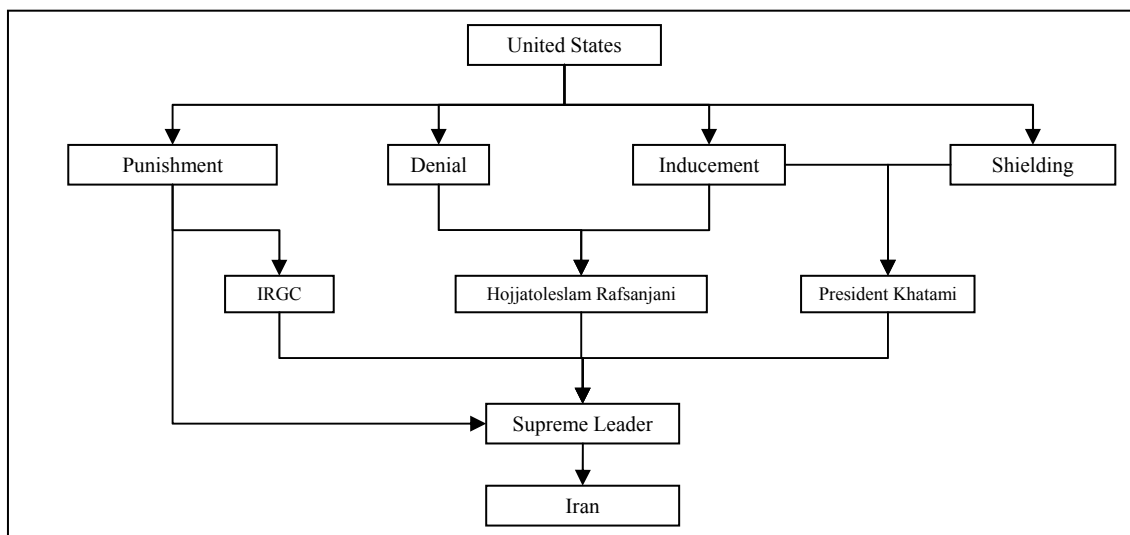**Figure 8 – Summary of Current US Coercion Strategies**

Figure 9 – Summary of Strategies in a Multiple-Actor Based Coercion

Summary

This chapter has applied the MACF developed in chapter 1 to the detailed analysis of Iran from chapter 2 to develop a plan for US coercion against Iran with respect to its pursuit of nuclear weapons. The plan identifies the four audiences that are important to Iranian decision-making on nuclear weapons and then describes the mechanisms for affecting their cost-benefit calculations. Those mechanisms were determined by connecting target sets to items the audiences value. The actions against each audience were combined to articulate an overall strategy of coercion for the United States to employ against Iran. When compared to the current unitary actor-based coercive campaign being waged by the United States against Iran, important differences are immediately apparent. Specifically, the coercion developed using the MACF expands the objects of coercion and applies instruments of power to affect all four potential components of their cost-benefit analysis (i.e., increase costs and decreased benefits of resistance and decreases costs and increased benefits of compliance).

Clearly, the coercive strategy developed by the MACF is more intricate than the current US coercive campaign. This is to be expected given the transition from unitary actor-based to multiple actor-based models of state decision-making. However, since real-world decision-making involves multiple actors, and real-world coercion involves influencing state decision-making, it makes little sense to develop coercive campaigns in any other way. To the degree the MACF provides an opportunity to increase the success of US coercion in general, and specifically with regard to states like Iran that are pursuing nuclear weapons, it represents a significant advance in coercion theory.

Conclusion

Coercion – the use of threatened force, and at times the limited use of actual force to back up the threat, to induce an adversary to change its behavior – should be easy for the United States.

—Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman
The Dynamics of Coercion

Although the [Unitary] Actor Model has proved useful for many purposes, there is powerful evidence that it must be supplemented by frames of reference that focus on the governmental machine – the organizations and political actors involved in the policy process.

—Graham Allison
The Essence of Decision

. . . Iranian policy is determined by a multitude of often loosely connected and fiercely competitive power centers.

—Wilfried Buchta
Who Rules in Iran?

In this thesis, I address a single research question: How can the United States coerce Iran to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons? I develop an answer to that question by analyzing theories of coercion, theories of state decision-making, and the nature of the Iranian state. This chapter provides a conclusion for the thesis by providing recommendations for the way ahead.

The Way Ahead

The MACF is a fundamentally different way to think about coercion. Translating it from an academic to real world application requires changes to US policy and additional research for the framework itself.

Policy Implications

The differences between unitary actor-based coercion theories and the MACF have implications for US policy. First, the change from unitary to multiple-actor based coercion requires detailed study of an adversary's decision making process. The United States must be able to identify the key audiences and their items of value for a given issue. This will likely require a level of nuanced cultural and political understanding that is difficult to obtain.

The United States must also expand, where appropriate, its willingness to employ all four coercive strategies. As shown in chapter 3, US coercion to date has relied almost exclusively on punishment and denial.[213] As illustrated by the MACF, however, broadening US coercion strategies to include shielding and inducement may increase the likelihood of success.

Additional Research

The MACF represents another attempt to advance the theory of coercion. Yet, a thesis-length work is insufficient to develop the idea completely. Thus, several important areas remain for further research. First, although the MACF disaggregates state decision-making, it too contains simplifications of organizational behavior. For example, it treats the organizations that make up governments as "purposeful individuals"; and in doing so, risks the same obfuscation that Allison says exists when treating entire states as purposeful individuals. Clearly, governmental organizations are also comprised of subordinate actors. For example, branches of government have departments and agencies, which in turn have divisions and sections, which are then made up of offices, and so on. Ultimately, it is individuals that make the decisions that are combined in complex ways to form the functioning of larger organizations, such as national governments. However, it is obviously impractical to develop coercion strategies around each individual employee of an adversary's government. Given limitations in modeling

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[213] Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice declared in early March 2005 that the United States would remove its opposition to an EU-3 initiative to facilitate Iran's admission to the World Trade Organization in return for its agreement not to enrich uranium. While this technically represents an inducement strategy, its scope is relatively small compared to the level of punishment and denial that has been the mainstay of US coercion efforts against Iran. See US Department of State, "Press Release: US Support for the EU-3," Secretary Condoleezza Rice, 11 March 2005, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/43276.htm, accessed 11 April 2005.

organizational behavior, at some level, organizations must be treated as individuals. The issue for future coercion research is to identify the specific level of governmental organization that is most productive to decision-making analysis for specific cases.

The second area of future research is to evaluate how the United States can overcome the five challenges to integrating its strategies of coercion. The coercive strategies employed by the Untied States must be integrated into a single effort. Therefore understanding the nuances and details of how punishment, denial, inducement, and shielding can be used in a complementary manner will be important to the likelihood of successfully coercing Iran. Future research is required to identify how the four strategies interact when integrated.

Conclusion

The United States has repeatedly identified Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons as one of its primary security threats. It has also repeatedly declared that it will not allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons. If the United States is going to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons without a complete occupation of Iran, it must rely on some type of coercion. Unfortunately, US coercive efforts to date have been ineffective.

Given the importance and urgency of the issue, the United States must develop a successful coercion strategy to employ against Iran. Drawing on current theories of coercion, models of state decision-making, and detailed analysis of Iranian politics, this thesis identifies some of the key components of such a strategy. Implementing that strategy will not be easy, but given the consequences of failed coercion, there is little justification for not trying.

Appendix A - Allison's Decision-Making Models

	Unitary Actor Model	Organization Process Model	Burea...
State Viewed As:	A rational, unitary decision-maker with one set of specified goals.	State is loose collection of organizations that act only as component organizations performing routines.	A collection... share powe... unique conc...
Decision-Making Viewed As:	Deliberate national choice to maximize strategic goals or objectives based on one set of perceived options, and a single estimate of consequences.	The choice constraining output of government organizations performing standard procedures and programs.	Context-sp... compromis... central play... power but s... state issues.
Keys to Decision-Making	Identify logical choices based on cost-benefit analysis for a given decision-making issue.	Identify relevant organizations and organizational behavior involved in a decision-making issue.	Identify the... positions, r... interaction... involved in...
State Action Best Explained by:	Intentional pursuit of a specific end.	How state acted in similar situations previously.	The pulling... players, eac... perceptions... on separate... outcomes th...
General Propositions:	• States make decisions based on cost-benefit analysis	• Decision not necessarily far-sighted, response to the issue • Organizations often respond inappropriately to non-standard situations since they do not have existing procedures • Organizational procedures are parochial	• Decisio... rather... compro... • State d... collages... outcom... politica...

Figure 10 – Summary of Allison's Decision-Making Models

Data for this figure distilled from Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *The American Political Science Review* 63, no. 3 (Sep 1969) and Graham T. Allison, and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision, Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2d ed. (New York: Longman, 1999).

Appendix B - Components of the MACF

Component	Description
Authority	The individuals or organizations empowered to declare a state's intention regarding its decision to resist or comply with coercion. May or may not be an audience.
Audience	The specific individuals whose cost-benefit calculus a coercing state seeks to influence. May or may not be the authority.
Mechanism	The chain of events initiated during coercion that will affect the cost-benefit decision calculus of an audience to adopt a particular position on a given issue.
Power Base Erosion	Threatening an actor's relationship with its core supporters
Unrest	Creating popular dissatisfaction with an actor
Decapitation	Jeopardizing a actor's personal security or ability to stay in power
Weakening	Debilitating the country as a whole
Denial	Preventing battlefield success (or political victories via military aggression)
Incentive	Enticing an actor to accept the coercer's demands through transfer of wealth of other valuable items
Target Set	An entity that, when affected by the coercer, affects an item of value. May or may not be an item of value.
Item of Value	Tangible or intangible items important to an audience. May or may not be a target set.
Coercive Strategy	Actions categorized by whether they affect the costs or benefits a state is likely to realize if it resists or complies with a coercer's demands
Punishment	Seeks to raise the costs of resistance
Denial	Seeks to lower the benefits a state expects to obtain through resistance
Shielding	Seeks to lower the costs a state will bear if it complies with a coercer's demands.
Inducement	Seeks to increase the benefits a state will receive for complying with a coercer's demands

Figure 11 – Key Components of Multiple Actor Coercion Framework

Appendix C – Coercion in OAF

Component	Unitary Actor Coercion	Multiple Actor Coercion
Authority	**Slobodan Milosevic**	**Slobodan Milosevic**
Audience	**N/A**	1. **Slobodan Milosevic** 2. **Power Elite in Serbia**

Mechanism	**Punishment**
	
	Denial
		1. **Punishment**
		
		   Denial
		
		   Power Base Erosion
		
		2. **Punishment**

Target Set	**Military Capability** **Select Dual Use Infrastructure**	1. **Fielded Force** **Military Infrastructure** 2. **Select Dual Use Infrastructure**
Item of Value	**N/A**	1. **Military Capability** 2. **Economic / Business interests of Serbian Elite**
Instrument	**Diplomacy, Economic Sanctions, Information Operations and Aerial Bombing**	**Diplomacy, Economic Sanctions, Information Operations and Aerial Bombing**
Coercive Strategy	**Military supported by Diplomatic, Informational, and**	**Military supported by Diplomatic, Informational, and**

Economic   **Economic**

**Figure 12 – A Comparison of Unitary Actor Coercion and Multiple Actor
Coercion in Operation Allied Force**

Appendix D - Iranian Political Factions

Political Factions

		Islamic Left			Modern Right	Traditionalist Right	
Group Structure	Main Supporting Organizations	Militant Clerics Society	Organization of Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution	Islamic Participation Party of Iran, Organizational reserve of the pr-Khatami forces	Servants of the Reconstructions	Militant Clergy Association	Coalition of Islamic Associations, organizational reserve for the most powerful bazaar traders groups
	Leader	Mehdi Karrubi	Behzad Nabavi	Abbas Abdi, Sa'id Hajariyan	Glolaam-Hosein Karbaschi	Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri,Mahda viKani	Habibollah Asgar-Ouladi, Asadollah Badamshian
	Power Base	Revolutionary Functionaries, IRGC, Student Associations			Technocrats in the Government Bureaucracy	Bazaar traders, Judiciary, Revolutionary foundations, minorities in secret service, IRGC	Basij militia,
Domestic Politics	Position on Islamic vs. Constitutional Law	Islamic law Subordinate to the constitution, people's sovereignty			Islamic law Subordinate to the constitution, people's sovereignty	Islamic Law superior to the constitution and people's sovereignty	
	Political Orientation	Social revolutionary-Islamic			Liberal-Islamic technocrat	Conservative-Islamic	
	Party Pluralism	Recently supportive			Supportive	Strictly opposed	
	Freedom of Opinion	Supportive			Supportive	Opposed	
	Closed Society	Recently greatly opposed			Opposed	Supportive	
Economic Politics	Economic Orientation	Between Islamic socialism and restricted capitalism			Modern industrial capitalism	Pre-industrial bazaari capitalism	
	State Control	Supportive			Opposed	Opposed	
	Subsidies	Supportive			Opposed	Supportive	
	Western Investment	Opposed			Supportive	Opposed	
Foreign Policy	Reconcile with USA	Recently overwhelmingly supportive			Supportive	Opposed	
	Export of Revolution	Generally against, but with individual exceptions			Opposed	Ambiguous	

Figure 13 – Iranian Political Factions

This is a modified version of the table compiled by Wilfried Buchta. See Wilfried Buchta, *Who Rules Iran? The Structure of power in the Islamic Republic* (Washington D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2000), 8.

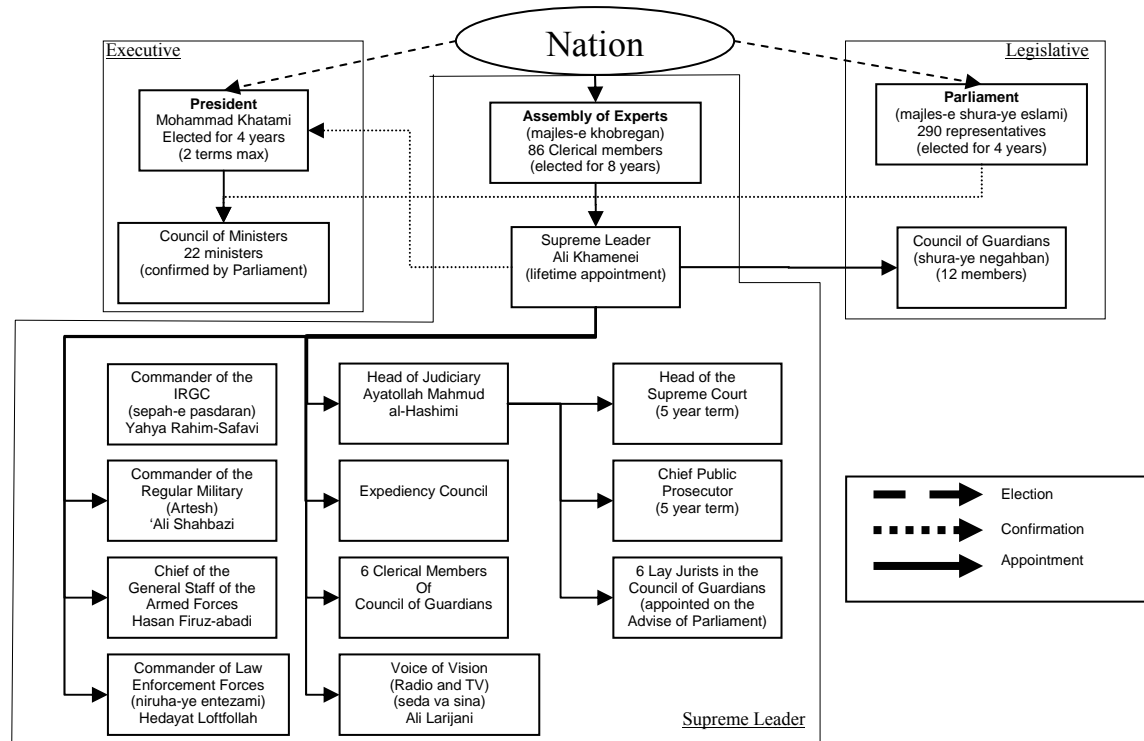# Appendix E - Relationship of Institutions of the Iranian Government

Figure 14 – Relationship of Institution of the Iranian Government

Wilfried Buchta, *Who Rules Iran? The Structure of power in the Islamic Republic* (Washington D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East P Policy and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2000), 8.

Appendix F - Powers of Iranian Government Offices

Government Office	Formal Authority	Informal Authority

Supreme Leader	• **Commander in chief of the armed forces**
	
	• **Controls intelligence and security operations**
	
	• **Sole authority to declare war and peace**
	
	• **Appoint and dismiss the leaders of :**
	
	  o **State radio/TV**
	
	  o **Commander of IRGC**
	
	  o **Head of judiciary**
	
	  o **Head of regular military and security services**
	
	  o **The six clerical jurists of the Council of Guardians**
		• **Sets the tone of domestic and foreign policy**
		
		• **Embodiment of Iranian Shi'a culture**

President	• **Determines state economic policy**	• **Legitimize actions of Supreme Leader** • **Near-equal to Supreme Leader as part of Iranian diarchy**
Parliament	• **Drafts legislation** • **Ratifies international treaties** • **Approves state budgets**	• **Provides limited representative government**
Council of Guardians	• **Certifies Parliamentary laws based on compliance with Islamic Law** • **Interpret the constitution** • **Certifies candidates to run in Presidential, Parliamentary, and Assembly of Experts elections**	• **Influences general direction of domestic and foreign policy** • **Members also hold other important positions in government and *bonyads***

Assembly of Experts	• **Serves as advisory body to Supreme Leader** • **Elects, removes, or replaces Supreme Leader from its members when necessary** • **Performs the functions of the Supreme Leader if one is not elected**	• **Influences general direction of domestic and foreign policy**
Expediency Council	• **Resolves conflicts between the Parliament and Council of Guardians** • **Head of Council serves as personal advisor to Supreme Leader**	• **Influences general direction of domestic and foreign policy**
Artesh	• **Conventional army to defend Iran from external threats**	• **Counter-balance to IRGC**
IRGC	• **Directly accountable to the Supreme Leader** • **Protect the Islamic Revolution and its achievements** • **Command military surface-to-surface missile systems and WMD programs** • **Internal security force**	• **Instruments of political oppression for the Supreme Leader** • **Counter-balance to *Artesh*** • **Supports international Shi'a oppositions groups**
Basij	• **Para-legal force of IRGC** • **Enforce adherence to Islamic Law**	• **Instrument of political oppression for Supreme Leader**

Figure 15 – Powers of Iranian Government Offices

Appendix G - Power Centers by Faction

Power Center	Islamic Left	Modern Right*	Traditional Right
Supreme Leader			X
President		X	
Speak of Parliament			X
Parliament			X
Assembly of Experts			X
Council of Guardians			X
Expediency Council		X	
Head of Judiciary			X
IRGC		X**	X**
Martyr Bonyad	X		
15th Khordad Bonyad		X	

Figure 16 – Power Centers by Faction

* Includes Islamic Left – Modern Right alliance formed under Khatami
** Senior IRGC leaders support the Traditional Right, but the rank and file soldiers are more supportive of reform

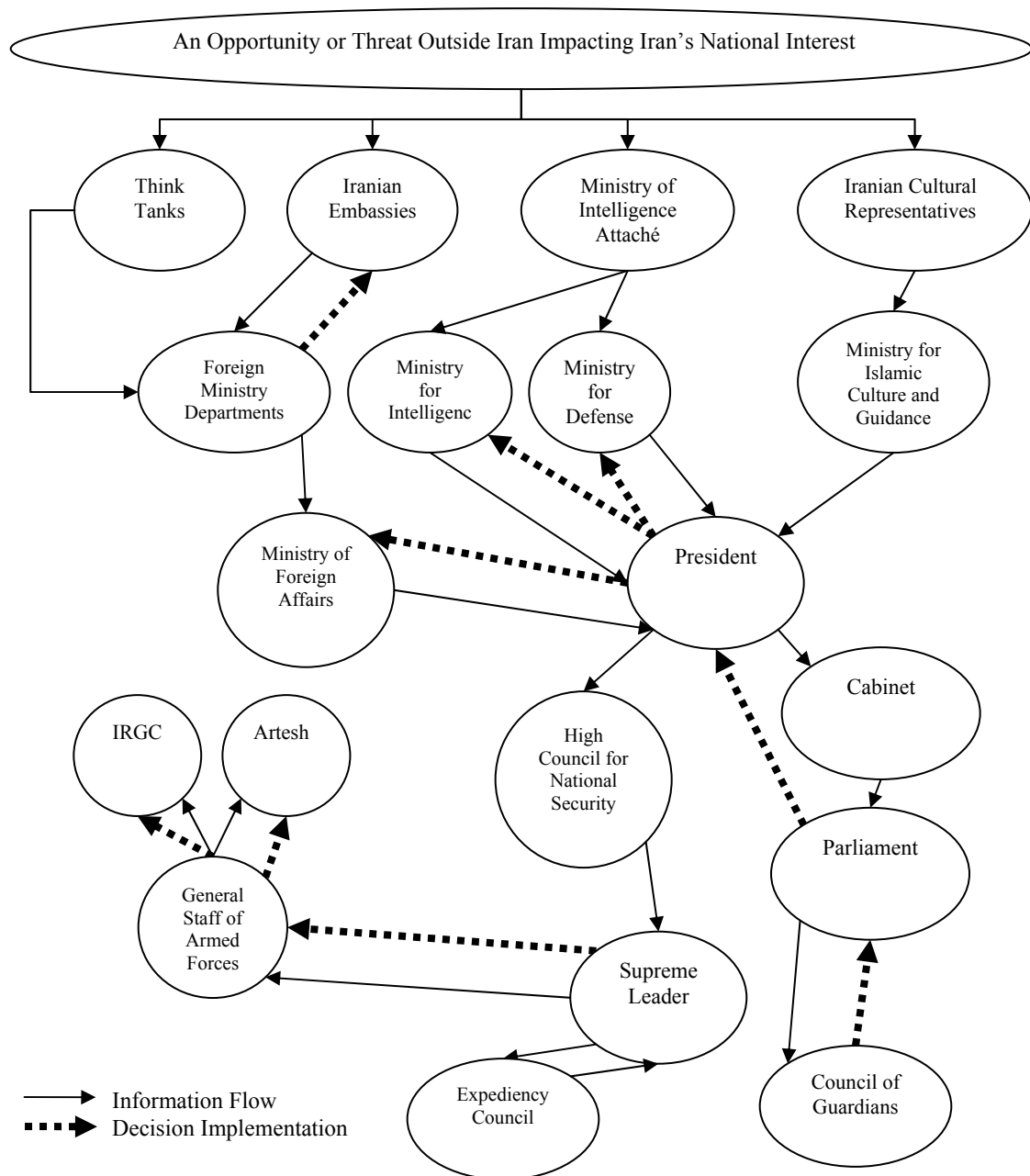# Appendix H - Iranian Decision-Making Process

Figure 17 – Iranian Decision-Making Process

This figure is a simplified version of the diagram presented in Abbas Malek, "Decision Making In Iran: A Heuristic Approach," *Journal of Social Affairs* 19, no. 73 (Spring 2002): 39-53.

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